DIOCLESIAN

THE

WORKS

OF

M. DE VOLTAIRE.

Tranſlated from the FRENCH.

WITH

NOTES, HISTORICAL, CRITICAL, AND EXPLANATORY.

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AND OTHERS.

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THE

PROSE WORKS

OF

Mr. De VOLTAIRE.

VOL. XII.

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MISCELLANIES

IN

HISTORY, LITERATURE, AND PHILOSOPHY.

OF THE JEWS.

YOU desire me to give you a faithful picture of the spirit and history of the Jews; and, without entering into the ineffable ways of Providence, you want to discover, in the manners of that people, the true origin of those events which Providence hath brought about.

Certain it is, of all the nations in the world, that of the Jews is the most remarkable. However contemptible they may be in the eyes of a politician, they are nevertheless well worthy of the serious attention of a philosopher.

The Guebres, the Banians, and the Jews, are the only people that preserve a being, notwithstanding their dispersion; and, without making an alliance with any other nation, per-

petuate their race among ſtrangers, from whom they keep themſelves intirely diſtinct.

In former times the Guebres were infinitely more numerous than the Jews, as being the remains of the ancient Perſians, who held the Jews in ſubjection: at preſent, however, they are only to be found in one corner of the Eaſt.

The Banians, ſprung from thoſe ancient people from whom Pythagoras derived his philoſophy, are only to be met with in Perſia and the Indies: but the Jews are ſcattered through the whole earth; and, were they now to be collected into one body, would compoſe a nation far more numerous than they were during the ſhort period that they were maſters of Paleſtine. Thoſe people who have committed to writing the hiſtory of their origin, have, almoſt all of them, endeavoured to heighten it with prodigies: with them, every thing is miraculous: their oracles foretel nothing but conqueſts; and ſuch of them as have really become conquerors, have made no difficulty to believe the truth of ancient oracles, ſo amply juſtified by the event. But what diſtinguiſhes the Jews from all other nations is, that their oracles alone are true: of this we are not permitted to entertain the leaſt doubt. Theſe oracles, which they underſtand in the literal ſenſe, have foretold, a hundred times, that they ſhould one day become maſters of the world; notwithſtanding which, they were never in poſſeſſion of more than one paltry ſpot for a few years; nor have they, at preſent, a ſingle village they can call their own. They are therefore bound to believe, and in fact they do believe, that theſe predictions will be one day

day accompliſhed, and that they ſhall obtain the empire of the univerſe.

Among the Muſſulmans and Chriſtians they are conſidered as people of the meaneſt and moſt deſpicable character, and yet they believe themſelves to be of the greateſt importance. This pride, in the midſt of their abaſement, is juſtified by an unanſwerable argument; to wit, that they are really the fathers of both the Chriſtians and the Muſſulmans. The Chriſtian and Mahometan religions acknowledge that of the Jews for their mother; whom, nevertheleſs, by a ſtrange kind of contradiction, they at once reſpect and abhor.

It is not our intention here to recount that long train of prodigies, which aſtoniſh the imagination, and exerciſe our faith. We only mean to examine thoſe events which are purely hiſtorical, ſtript of the divine agency, and of thoſe miracles which God condeſcended, for ſo long a time, to work in favour of this people.

At firſt, we behold in Egypt a ſingle family of ſeventy perſons. This in the ſpace of two hundred and fifteen years, produced a nation capable of furniſhing ſix hundred thouſand fighting men, which, together with the old men, women, and children, may be ſuppoſed to amount to two millions of ſouls: a prodigious increaſe! to which the hiſtory of mankind cannot furniſh a parallel inſtance. This multitude, having left Egypt, continued in the deſerts of Arabia Petræa for forty years, during which their numbers were conſiderably diminiſhed in that cold and barren country.

The remaining part of the nation advanced a little to the northward of theſe deſerts.

It appears, that their principles were the ſame with thoſe which were afterwards adopted by the natives of Arabia Petræa and Deſerta; for they put to death, in cold blood, the inhabitants of the ſmall towns which they took, and reſerved only the young women. The intereſt of population hath always been the chief aim of both the one and the other. We find that when the Arabs conquered Spain, they impoſed a tax of marriageable virgins upon all the provinces; and, even at this day, the Arabs of the Deſert never make a treaty without ſtipulating for ſome preſents and young women.

The Jews arrived in a ſandy and mountainous country, in which there were ſome villages, inhabited by a ſmall nation called the Medianites *; from whom they took, in the courſe of one campaign, ſix hundred and ſeventy-five thouſand ſheep, ſeventy-two thouſand oxen, ſixty-one thouſand aſſes, and thirty-two thouſand maids. All the men, all the married women, and all the male children, were put to the ſword. The young women and the booty were divided among the people and the prieſts.

They afterwards made themſelves maſters of the town of Jericho †, in the ſame country; but,

* They derived their name from Median, ſaid to be the ſon of Abraham and Ketura; and inhabited the country of Arabia Petræa. But that the whole nation was thus extirpated ſeems a little improbable, inaſmuch as we find the Iſraelites enſlaved by the Medianites in the ſequel; a ſtate of ſlavery from which they were delivered by Gideon.

† Joſephus tells us, that the plain of Jericho was planted with the tree which produces the real balm of Gilead, whence the city took the name of Jericho, which ſignifies ſweet odour. But none of thoſe trees are now to be ſeen on this ſpot.

having

having previouſly devoted the inhabitants to deſtruction, they put them all to the ſword, not even ſparing the young women; and granted life to none but to a harlot named Rahab, who had aſſiſted them in ſurpriſing the town.

It hath long been matter of diſpute among the learned, whether the Jews offered human ſacrifices to the Deity, like other nations; but this is merely a controverſy about words. Thoſe, it is true, whom they devoted to deſtruction, were not butchered upon the altar with all the parade of religious rites; but they were nevertheleſs ſacrificed, without its being lawful to ſpare ſo much as a ſingle perſon. In the twenty-ninth chapter of Leviticus, and twenty-ſeventh verſe, the Moſaic law expreſly forbids them to ranſom thoſe whom they had devoted to deſtruction: the words are, "Let them die the death." It was in conſequence of this law that Jephtha vowed, and butchered his daughter; that Saul endeavoured to kill his ſon; and that Samuel the prophet hewed king Agag, Saul's priſoner, in pieces. Certain it is, God is the abſolute maſter of the lives of his creatures; nor does it belong to us to examine his laws. It is our duty to believe theſe facts, and ſilently to reverence the deſigns of the Deity in permitting them.

It is likewiſe aſked, what right could ſtrangers, ſuch as the Jews were, have to the land of Canaan? To which they anſwer, that they had that right which God gave them.

Hardly had they taken Jericho and Laiſh, when a civil war broke out among them, in which the tribe of Benjamin, men, women, and children, was almoſt intirely extirpated. Of

the whole, there only remained ſix hundred males; and, in order to prevent the total ruin of one of their tribes, they thought proper to deſtroy a whole town of the tribe of Manaſſeh with fire and ſword, killing all the men, children, married women, and widows, and taking thence ſix hundred virgins, whom they gave to the ſix hundred ſurviving Benjaminites to repair their tribe, that ſo the number of their twelve tribes might be always complete.

Mean while the Phœnicians, a powerful people eſtabliſhed in theſe quarters from time immemorial, being alarmed at the depredations and cruelties of theſe new comers, chaſtiſed them frequently; and the neighbouring princes uniting againſt them, they were reduced to a ſtate of ſervitude for upwards of two hundred years.

At laſt they made a king, and choſe him by lot. This king could not poſſibly be powerful; for in the firſt battle which the Jews under his command fought with the Philiſtines, their maſters, they had neither ſword nor ſpear, nor a ſingle weapon of iron. But David, their ſecond king, makes war with more advantage and ſucceſs. He takes the town of Salem *; is famous afterwards under the name of Jeruſalem; and then the Jews begin to make ſome figure in the confines of Syria.

* It is ſuppoſed to have been founded by Melchiſedec; to have been taken by the Jebuſites, who poſſeſſed it till the time of Joſhua, who reduced the city, and cauſed their king Adonizedec, with four princes his allies, to be put to death. After the death of Joſhua they recovered it, and built the citadel of Sion, of which they were diſpoſſeſſed by David.

From

From this time their religion and government aſſume a more auguſt form. Hitherto they had had no temples; a convenience poſſeſſed by all the nations around them. Solomon built a very ſuperb one, and reigned over this people for about forty years.

The reign of Solomon is not only the moſt flouriſhing period of the Jews, but all the kings of the earth together could not produce a treaſure nearly equal to that of Solomon's. His father David, who was not even poſſeſſed of iron, left Solomon twenty-five thouſand ſix hundred and forty-eight millions of French livres in ready money ‖, according to the preſent computation. His fleets, which traded to Ophir, brought him annually ſixty eight millions in pure gold, not to mention ſilver and precious ſtones. He had forty thouſand ſtables, as many coach-houſes, twelve thouſand ſtables for his cavalry, ſeven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines. And yet he had neither wood nor workmen to build his palace and the temple: theſe he borrowed from Hyram, king of Tyre, who likewiſe furniſhed him with gold, in return for which Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities. The commentators acknowledge that theſe facts are dubious, and ſuſpect that ſome error in the calculation muſt have eſcaped the tranſcribers; the only perſons, it ſeems, that could poſſibly be miſtaken.

‖ The ſum contributed by David and his princes towards the building of the temple, according to the value of the Moſaic talent, and the account given in the book of Chronicles, muſt have exceeded eight hundred millions ſterling.

The twelve tribes, of which the nation conſiſted, were ſeparated upon Solomon's death. The kingdom was torn in pieces, and divided into two petty provinces, the one called Judea, the other Iſrael; the latter containing nine tribes and a half, the former only two and a half. There reigned between theſe two nations a hatred, the more implacable as they were neighbours and relations, and profeſſed a different form of religion; for at Sichem and Samaria they worſhipped Baal, a word of Sidonian extraction; whereas at Jeruſalem, Adonai was the object of their worſhip. At Sichem two calves were conſecrated, and at Jeruſalem two cherubims; the latter of which were two-winged animals, with two heads a-piece, and placed in the ſanctuary. Thus each party, having their own kings, their own God, their own worſhip, and their own prophets, were perpetually engaged in a cruel war with one another.

During the courſe of this war, the kings of Aſſyria, who conquered the greateſt part of Aſia, fell upon the Jews, with the rapidity of an eagle darting down upon two fighting lizards. The nine tribes and a half, ſettled at Samaria and Sichem, were carried off, and diſperſed beyond all poſſibility of return, and without its ever being diſtinctly known whither they were led into captivity.

As the diſtance from Samaria to Jeruſalem is but twenty leagues, and their territories lie contiguous, when one of theſe towns was razed by the powerful conquerors, the other could not hold out long. Thus we find that Jeruſalem was often ſacked: it was tributary to the

the kings Hazael and Rezin; reduced to ſlavery by Teglatphalezer; thrice taken by Nebuchadnezzar, or Nebucchadonezer; and at laſt deſtroyed. Zedekiah, whom the conqueror had appointed king or governor, was carried captive, together with all his people, into Babylon; ſo that no Jews were left remaining in Paleſtine, except a few families of country ſlaves to ſow the land.

With regard to the little country of Samaria and Sichem, which was more fertile than that of Jeruſalem, it was repeopled by colonies of ſtrangers, who were ſent thither by the kings of Aſſyria, and took the name of Samaritans.

The two tribes and a half, continuing in a ſtate of ſlavery for ſeventy years together in Babylon, and the neighbouring towns, had thereby an opportunity of learning the cuſtoms of their maſters, and of enriching their language by a proper mixture of the Chaldean tongue. From that time the Jews underſtood no other alphabet, or characters, than thoſe of the Chaldeans; and it is an indiſputable fact, that they even forgot the Hebrew dialect, ſubſtituting in its place from thenceforward the Chaldean tongue. Joſephus, the hiſtorian, declares, that he wrote at firſt in the Chaldean tongue, which was the language of his country. It appears, that the Jews imbibed a ſmall tincture of the ſciences of the magi. They ſoon became bankers, brokers, and chapmen; by which means they rendered themſelves neceſſary, as they ſtill are, and acquired immenſe fortunes.

Their great riches enabled them to procure from Cyrus a permiſſion to rebuild Jeruſalem;

but when the time came, at which they were to have ſet out on their return home, thoſe who had grown rich at Babylon did not chuſe to quit ſuch a beautiful country for the mountains of Celoſyria, nor to abandon the fertile banks of the Tigris and Euphrates for the brook of Kidron. It was only the dregs and refuſe of the nation that returned with Zorobabel. The Jews of Babylon contributed only by their charitable collections towards rebuilding the city and temple; and even theſe collections were very inconſiderable. Eſdras ſays, that he could not make up in the whole above ſeventy thouſand crowns for rebuilding that temple, which was to be the temple of the univerſe.

The Jews were ſtill ſubject to the Perſians, as they were likewiſe ſoon after to Alexander; and when that great man, the moſt excuſeable of all conquerors, began, in the firſt years of his victorious reign, to build Alexandria, and to make it the center of commerce to the whole world, the Jews flocked thither to follow their trade of brokerage; and then it was that their rabbies acquired ſome knowledge of the learning of the Greeks, the language of which people was now become abſolutely neceſſary to all the trading Jews.

After the death of Alexander, they continued in ſubjection to the kings of Syria, in Jeruſalem, and to the kings of Egypt in Alexandria; and when a war broke out between theſe monarchs, the Jews always underwent the common fate of ſubjects, and fell to the conqueror's ſhare.

From the time of their Baloniſh captivity, the governors of Jeruſalem never aſſumed the name

name of king. The adminiſtration of civil affairs was intruſted to the high prieſts, who were nominated by their maſters. This dignity they ſometimes purchaſed at a very high price, as is ſtill done by the Greek patriarch of Conſtantinople.

Under Antiochus Epiphanes they raiſed a rebellion: the city was once more pillaged, and its walls laid level with the ground.

At length, after a train of the like diſaſters, they obtained from Antiochus Sidetes, for the firſt time, about one hundred and fifty years before the vulgar æra, the liberty of coining money. From this time their governors aſſumed the name of kings and even wore a diadem. Antigonus was the firſt that was adorned with this enſign of royalty, which, after all, when ſtript of power, can confer but little honour.

The Romans now began to be formidable to the kings of Syria, who held the Jews in ſubjection; but theſe laſt gained the ſenate of Rome by their preſents and ſubmiſſive behaviour. The wars, which the Romans were waging in Aſia Minor, ſeemed to promiſe a long reſpite to this unhappy people; but hardly had Jeruſalem begun to enjoy the leaſt degree of liberty, when it was rent by civil wars, and rendered much more miſerable under its ſhadows of kings, than ever it had been in all the various kinds of ſlavery in which it had been involved.

The better to compoſe their inteſtine commotions, they choſe the Romans for their umpires. Moſt of the kingdoms of Aſia Minor, of the ſouthern part of Africa, and of three

fourths of Europe, already acknowledged the Romans for their lords and ſovereigns.

Pompey came into Syria to adminiſter juſtice to the different nations, and to depoſe ſome petty tyrants. Being impoſed upon by Ariſtobulus, who contended for the ſovereignty of Jeruſalem, he avenged himſelf both on him and his party. He took the city, hanged ſome of the moſt ſeditious, whether prieſts or Phariſees, and, long after that, condemned Ariſtobulus, the king of the Jews, to undergo a capital puniſhment.

The Jews, always wretched, always ſlaves, and always rebellious, drew upon them once more the Roman arms. Craſſus and Caſſius were ſent to chaſtiſe them; and Metellus Scipio cauſed one Alexander, a ſon of king Ariſtobulus, and the author of all theſe diſturbances, to be crucified.

Under Julius Cæſar they were perfectly quiet and peaceable. Herod, who hath ſince become famous among us, as well as among them, and was for a long time a ſimple tetrarch, purchaſed the crown of Judæa from Anthony at a very high price. But Jeruſalem refuſed to acknowledge this new king, becauſe he was deſcended from Eſau, and not from Jacob, and was beſides an Idumæan; and yet this circumſtance of his being a ſtranger was the very thing that induced the Romans to chuſe him, the better to curb this ſeditious people.

The Romans ſupported the king of their own nomination with an army; and Jeruſalem was once more taken by aſſault, ſacked, and pillaged.

Herod,

Herod, being afterwards ſupported by Auguſtus, became one of the moſt powerful princes among all the petty monarchs of Arabia. He repaired Jeruſalem, and rebuilt the fortreſs that ſurrounded the temple, for which the Jews had ſo great a veneration. He even began to build the temple anew; but could not bring the work to perfection, for want of money and workmen. Hence it appears, that, after all, Herod was far from being rich, and that the Jews, though fond of their temple, were ſtill fonder of their money.

The name of king was merely a favour granted by the Romans, and by no means a title of ſucceſſion: for, ſoon after Herod's death, Judæa was reduced into the form of a leſſer Roman province, and governed by the proconſul of Syria; though the title of king was ſold, from time to time, for a round ſum of money, ſometimes to a Jew, and ſometimes to one of another country; as it was to Agrippa the Jew, under the emperor Claudius.

Berenice, ſo famous for having engaged the affections of one of the beſt Roman emperors, was a daughter of Agrippa. This was the lady who, on account of the bad treatment which ſhe ſuffered from her countrymen, drew upon Jeruſalem the vengeance of the Roman arms. She demanded juſtice; but the factions in the city prevented her from obtaining her requeſt. The ſeditious ſpirit of the people carried them into new exceſſes. Cruelty hath ever been their diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic, and ſevere exemplary puniſhments their juſt lot.

This memorable ſiege, which ended in the deſtruction of the city, was conducted by Titus

tus and Veſpaſian. It is alledged by Joſephus, whoſe accounts indeed are moſtly exaggerated, that in the courſe of this ſhort war, a million of Jews and upwards, were put to the ſword: no wonder that an author, who aſſigns fifteen thouſand inhabitants to every little village, ſhould kill a million of men! what remained of the people, were expoſed in the public markets, and every Jew was ſold for much the ſame price that is uſually paid for the unclean animal which they dare not eat.

In this laſt diſperſion, they ſtill hoped for a deliverer, and under the reign of Adrian, whom they curſed in their prayers, there aroſe one Barcoſhebas, who called himſelf a new Moſes, a Shilo, a Chriſt. A number of theſe unhappy wretches having crowded to his ſtandard, which they believed to be ſacred, were entirely deſtroyed, together with their leader; and this gave a finiſhing ſtroke to the fortunes of that nation, from which it was never afterwards able to recover. The only thing that hath preſerved them from utter deſtruction is their prevailing opinion, that barrenneſs is a diſgrace. There are two duties which the Jews conſider as the moſt indiſpenſable of all others, namely, the getting of money and children.

From this ſhort ſketch, it appears that the Jews have always been either fugitives, or free-booters, or ſlaves, or rebels. At this very day they are vagabonds in the earth, and deteſted by the reſt of mankind; confident as they are, that the heaven and the earth and all its inhabitants were created for them alone.

It is evident, as well from the ſituation of Judea, as from the genius of the people, that they

they muſt ever have been in a ſtate of ſubjection. Surrounded as they were, by ſtrong and warlike nations, which they abhorred, they could neither enter into an alliance with them, nor receive any protection from them. They could not poſſibly defend themſelves by a naval force, having ſoon loſt the harbour, which in Solomon's time they had in the Red Sea; and Solomon himſelf having always employed Tyrians to build and navigate his ſhips, as well as to raiſe the temple, and his own palace. Hence too it appears that the Hebrews were ſtrangers to induſtry, and could never compoſe a flouriſhing nation. They had no regular troops, as the Aſſyrians, the Medes, the Perſians, the Syrians and the Romans had. Their artiſts and peaſants took to arms upon preſſing emergencies, and of conſequence could never form a body of brave and warlike troops. Their mountains, or to ſpeak more properly, their rocks, were neither ſufficiently high nor ſufficiently contiguous to defend the entry into their country. The greateſt part of the nation being tranſported to Babylon, to Perſia, or the Indies, or ſettled in Alexandria, were too cloſely engaged in trade and brokerage to think of war. Their civil government, whether republican, pontifical, monarchical, or reduced, as it often was, to a ſtate of anarchy, was as imperfect as their military diſcipline.

You aſk me what was the philoſophy of the Hebrews. My anſwer ſhall be very ſhort; they had no philoſophy at all. Their legiſlator does not ſo much as mention the immortality of the ſoul, nor a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments. Joſephus and Philo Judeus believe that

ſouls

ſouls are material. Their doctors admit of corporeal angels; and during their abode at Babylon, they gave theſe angels the ſame names which the Chaldeans gave them; ſuch as Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel. The word Satan is of Babyloniſh extraction, and is much the ſame with the Aremanes of Zoroaſter. The name Aſmodeus too is a Chaldean word; and Tobias, who lived at Nineveh, is the firſt that uſed it. It was not till a long time after this that the Phariſees broached the doctrine of the immortality of the ſoul. The Sadducees always denied the ſpirituality and immortality of the ſoul, as alſo the exiſtence of angels; and yet the Sadducees always communicated with the Phariſees: there were even ſome high prieſts of the former ſect. This difference of opinions in theſe two great bodies was not productive of any diſturbances. During the latter years of their abode at Jeruſalem, the Jews were only attached to their ceremonial law. The man who ſhould have taſted of pudding or rabbit, would have been ſtoned: but he that denied the immortality of the ſoul, might attain to the dignity of high prieſt.

It is commonly ſuppoſed, that the hatred which the Jews bore to all other nations, was owing to their deteſtation of idolatry; but it is more probable that it proceeded from the barbarous manner in which they extirpated ſome colonies of the Canaanites, and the indignation which the neighbouring nations muſt of courſe have conceived againſt them. As they did not know of any other nations but ſuch as bordered on their own country, they imagined that in hating theſe they hated the whole earth, and

thus

thus accuſtomed themſelves to become the general enemies of mankind.

To be convinced that the idolatry of the neighbouring nations was not the true cauſe of their hatred, we need only conſult the hiſtory of the Jews, where we ſhall ſee that they themſelves were frequently idolaters. Solomon ſacrificed to ſtrange gods; nor can we hardly find one king after him, that did not permit the worſhip of their gods, and offer them incenſe. The province of Iſrael preſerved its two calves and ſacred groves, or adored other deities.

This idolatry, of which the Heathens are commonly accuſed, is a ſubject but little underſtood. Perhaps it would be no difficult matter to clear the theology of the ancients from this aſperſion. All civilized nations have ever had a knowledge of one ſupreme Being, the ſovereign lord of gods and men. The Egyptians themſelves acknowledged a firſt principle, which they called Knef, and to which every thing beſides was ſubordinate. The ancient Perſians adored the good principle Oromaſdes, and were very far from ſacrificing to the bad principle Arimanes, whom they conſidered in much the ſame light as we do the devil. The ancient Brachmans acknowledged one ſupreme Being. The Chineſe never joined any inferior being with the Deity, nor had they any idol till the worſhip of Fohi, and the ſuperſtition of the bonzees corrupted the minds of the people. The Greeks and Romans, notwithſtanding the great number of their gods, acknowledged Jupiter as the abſolute ſovereign of heaven and earth: nor does Homer himſelf

ſelf, even in his moſt abſurd poetical fictions, ſo much as once deviate from this truth. He always repreſents Jupiter as the only omnipotent Being, who ſends good and evil upon the earth, and who by a ſingle motion of his eyebrows makes both gods and men to tremble. It is true they raiſed altars and offered ſacrifices to other gods; but then they always conſidered them as of an inferior order, and dependant on the ſupreme Being. There is not a ſingle inſtance, in all the records of antiquity, where the name of the ſovereign of heaven and earth is given to an inferior deity, ſuch as to Mercury, Apollo, or Mars. The thunder hath ever been an attribute of the ſupreme Lord of all.

The notion of a ſupreme Being, and of his providence and eternal decrees, is to be found in the works of all the poets and philoſophers. In a word, it would perhaps be as unreaſonable to ſuppoſe that the ancients equalled their heroes, their genii and inferior deities to that being whom they called the father and ſovereign of the gods, as it would be to imagine that we conſidered ſaints and angels as equal to the deity.

You further aſk me whether the ancient philoſophers and legiſlators derived their knowledge from the Jews, or the Jews from them. For an anſwer to this queſtion we muſt conſult Philo Judeus, who owns that before the ſeptuagint tranſlation of the Bible, the books of the Jewiſh nation were entirely unknown to foreigners. Beſides, it can hardly be ſuppoſed that great and mighty nations ſhould borrow

their

their laws and knowledge from a handful of obſcure ſlaves. Add to this, that the Jews had no books in the time of Hoziah. Under his reign the only remaining copy of the law was found by accident. From the time of the Babyloniſh captivity, they underſtood no alphabet but that of the Chaldeans. They were not famous for any art or manufacture; and even in the time of Solomon they were obliged to hire foreign workmen at a high price. To ſuppoſe that the Egyptians, the Greeks, and Perſians, derived their knowledge from the Jews, is to ſuppoſe that the Romans learned their arts and ſciences from the Low Bretons. The Jews were utterly unacquainted with natural philoſophy, geometry, and aſtronomy. Far from having any public ſchools for the education of youth, they have not ſo much as a word to expreſs that inſtitution. The inhabitants of Mexico and Peru regulated their year with much greater exactneſs than the Jews. Their abode at Babylon and Alexandria, where ſome of them might have been ſuppoſed to have acquired a little learning, contributed only to improve them in the practice of uſury. They never underſtood the art of coining money; even when they had obtained a permiſſion for that purpoſe from Antiochus Sidetes, it was four or five years before they could avail themſelves of it; and after all it is alledged that the money was coined at Samaria. Hence it is that Jewiſh medals are ſo rare, and that moſt of them are ſpurious. In a word, after the moſt exact ſcrutiny, you will find the Jews to be an ignorant and barbarous people, who have long

long joined the moſt ſordid avarice to moſt abominable ſuperſtition, and to an implacable hatred of all other nations, among which, however, they are allowed to reſide, and to acquire immenſe fortunes. "And yet we do not think they ſhould be committed to the flames."

OF THE

AGE

OF

CONSTANTINE and JULIAN.

OF all the ages that ſucceeded the reign of Auguſtus, that of Conſtanſtine is the moſt remarkable. The mighty innovations which he introduced into the world, will render his name famous to the lateſt poſterity. He began, it is true, by reviving the ſpirit of barbarity. Not only were there no Ciceros, no Horaces, no Virgils to be found in his reign; there were not even any Lucans or Senecas; not one judicious or faithful hiſtorian; nothing was to be ſeen but ſuſpected ſatires, or more dangerous panegyricks.

The Chriſtians began about this time to write hiſtory; but took neither Livy nor Thucydides for their model. The profeſſors of the ancient religion of the empire wrote with as little elegance of ſtile, and as little regard to truth. The two parties, inflamed with mutual rancour, loaded each other with the groſſeſt and moſt undiſtinguiſhing abuſe; and hence it is that we find the ſame man ſometimes exalted into a God, and ſometimes degraded into a devil.

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The Romans began viſibly to decline in all the polite ſciences, and even in the loweſt mechanic arts, as well as in virtue and eloquence, after the reign of Marcus Aurelius. He was the laſt emperor of the Stoic ſect; a ſect that raiſes man above himſelf, by making him ſevere to his own failings, and compaſſionate towards the failings of others. After the death of this truly philoſophic emperor, all was tyranny and confuſion. The ſoldiers frequently diſpoſed of the imperial crown. The ſenate fell into ſuch contempt, that in the time of Galien a law was enacted expreſly prohibiting the ſenators from following a military life. We find at one and the ſame time no leſs than thirty leading men, each at the head of a party, aſſuming the title of emperor, in thirty different provinces. About the middle of the third century, the barbarians poured in from all quarters upon the empire, which was already torn in pieces by the inteſtine broils, and which, nevertheleſs, maintained itſelf for ſome time by the mere force of its military diſcipline.

During theſe commotions chriſtianity gained ground by degrees, eſpecially in Egypt and Syria, and on the borders of Aſia Minor. The Romans admitted of all kinds of religion, as well as of all ſorts of philoſophical ſects. They permitted the worſhip of Oſiris; and, notwithſtanding their frequent revolts, they even granted the Jews ſome very conſiderable privileges. But the people in the provinces roſe againſt the Chriſtians, who were likewiſe perſecuted by the magiſtrates; and even imperial edicts were frequently publiſhed againſt them. Nor ought we to wonder that chriſtianity was held

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in ſuch general deteſtation, whilſt ſo many other kinds of religion were tolerated. The Egyptians, the Jews, and the votaries of the Syrian goddeſs, and of ſuch a multiplicity of other ſtrange gods, never declared open war againſt the gods of the empire, nor ever exclaimed againſt the prevailing religion; but one of the firſt duties of a chriſtian was to extirpate the eſtabliſhed religion of the empire. The heathen prieſts complained loudly of the great diminution of ſacrifices and offerings; and the people, always headſtrong and fanatical, roſe againſt the Chriſtians, who were nevertheleſs protected by ſeveral emperors. Adrian forbad the Romans to moleſt them on any account. Marcus Aurelius gave ſtrict orders that they ſhould not be perſecuted on the ſcore of religion. Caracalla, Heliogabalus, Alexander, Philip, and Galien, allowed them an entire liberty of conſcience. In the third century they had public churches, which were very magnificent, and crowded with hearers; and ſo great was the liberty they enjoyed, that they held no leſs than ſixteen councils in the courſe of this century. The road to poſts of honour being ſhut againſt the firſt Chriſtians, who were moſtly of an obſcure extraction, they applied themſelves to commerce, and by that means acquired immenſe fortunes. This hath ever been the reſource of all thoſe ſectaries who are diſqualified for enjoying any poſt in the ſtate; ſuch as the Calviniſts in France, the Non-conformiſts in England, the Catholicks in Holland, the Armenians in Perſia, the Banians in India, and the Jews in every part of the globe. At laſt the toleration became unlimited,

limited, and the ſpirit of the government grew ſo gentle, that the Chriſtians were admitted to all kind of honours and dignities. They did not ſacrifice to the gods of the empire: the Romans never concerned themſelves whether they went to the temples or not; they allowed every one a full liberty of conſcience with regard to religious duties, and no body was obliged to perform them. The Chriſtians enjoyed the ſame liberty with others; and ſo true is it, that they attained to poſts of honour, that in 303, we find Diocleſian and Galerius depriving them of this advantage in that perſecution, which we ſhall have occaſion to mention in the ſequel.

We ought to adore the divine Providence in all its ways; but according to your orders, I confine myſelf to political hiſtory.

One Manes *, in the reign of Probus, and about the year 278, broached a new religion in Alexandria. This ſect was compoſed of the ancient principles of the Perſians, and of ſome doctrines of Chriſtianity. Probus and his ſucceſſor Carus, let Manes and the Chriſtians live in peace. Numerien gave them a full liberty of conſcience. Diocleſian protected the Chriſtians, and tolerated the Manichæans for twelve

* His firſt name was Curbicus, and his rank in life that of a ſlave to a widow, by whom he was adopted. At her death he aſſumed the name of Manes, pretended to be an apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, and even the Holy Ghoſt. He taught the good and evil principles of the magi, and the tranſmigration of ſouls: he denied the reſurrection, and forbad marriage. In a word, his doctrines are compoſed of a great number of abſurdities, borrowed from the religion of the Jews, Perſians, and other pagans.

years;

years; but in 296 he iſſued out an edict againſt the Manichæans, and baniſhed them as enemies to the empire, and friends to the Perſians. The Chriſtians were not comprehended in this edict, but continued to live in peace under Diocleſian, and to make open profeſſion of their religion in every part of the empire, till the two laſt years of that prince's reign.

In order to finiſh the picture which you deſire me to draw, I muſt here beg leave to give you a ſhort account of the ſtate of the Roman empire at this period. Notwithſtanding the violent ſhocks which it had lately ſuſtained, as well from internal commotions, as from the incurſions of the barbarians, it ſtill comprehended all that is now poſſeſſed by the grand ſignor, except Arabia, all the German dominions of the houſe of Auſtria; and indeed all the provinces of Germany as far as the Elbe. It likewiſe contained Italy, France, Spain, England, half of Scotland, all Africa, to the deſert of Dara, and even the Canary iſles. And yet theſe extenſive and widely diſtant countries were all held in ſubjection by an army not near ſo conſiderable as what France or Germany, when engaged in war, uſually ſend into the field.

This mighty empire continued to gather ſtrength; and even an increaſe of territory from the time of Cæſar, to that of Theodoſius, as well by its laws, its policy, and acts of generoſity, as by the force of its arms and the terror of its name. It is ſtill matter of great ſurprize, that not one of the many nations that were conquered by the Romans, hath ever been able, ſince the recovery of their liberty, either

to make ſuch large and ſpacious roads, or to build ſuch magnificent amphitheatres and public baths as were left them by their conquerors. Countries now almoſt reduced to deſerts, and over-run with barbarity, were then populous, and bleſſed with a regular government; ſuch as Epirus, Macedonia, Theſſalia, Illyria, Pannonia, and eſpecially Aſia Minor, and the borders of Africa. It muſt be owned indeed that Germany, France, and England, were far from being then what they are at preſent. Theſe three centuries ſeem to have gained moſt by the recovery of their liberty; and yet it has required near twelve countries to put them into the flouriſhing condition in which they now are. But with regard to all the reſt, it muſt be acknowledged that that they have loſt greatly by changing their laws and maſters. The ruins of Aſia Minor and of Greece, the ſcanty number of inhabitants that is now to be found in Egypt, and the barbarity that overſpreads Africa, are ſtanding monuments of the Roman grandeur. The many flouriſhing towns with which theſe countries were once covered, are now changed into wretched villages; and even the very ſoil has grown barren under the hands of its ſtupid and brutiſh inhabitants.

But I muſt now endeavour to give you a few remarks on the reign of Dioclesian, who was one of the moſt powerful emperors that ever ſwayed the Roman ſcepter, and has been the ſubject of much panegyrick, and of much ſatire.

Of DIOCLESIAN.

AFTER ſeveral weak or tyrannical reigns, Rome at laſt found a good emperor in Probus, who was nevertheleſs murdered by the legions. They choſe in his place one Carus, who was killed by a thunderbolt not far from the Tigris, as he was making war upon the Perſians. His ſon Numerian was immediately proclaimed by the ſoldiers. Hiſtorians tell us, and with an air of great gravity too, that this youth deplored the death of his father with ſuch floods of tears as almoſt deprived him of his ſight; and that in making a campaign he was ever after obliged to be ſurrounded with four curtains. He was killed in his bed by his father-in-law Aper, who aſcended the throne in his place. But a Gauliſh druid having foretold that Diocleſian, one of the generals of the army, ſhould become emperor immediately after having killed a wild boar, which in Latin is called Aper, that general aſſembled the army, killed Aper with his own hand, in preſence of the ſoldiers, and thus accompliſhed the druid's prediction. The hiſtorians who relate this oracle as an undoubted fact, deſerve to be fed with the fruit of the tree which the druids ſo greatly revere*. Certain it is, Diocleſian killed the emperor's father-in-law; and this it ſeems was his firſt title to the throne. The ſecond was, that Numerian had a brother called Carinus, who was likewiſe emperor, and who having oppoſed the elevation of Diocleſian,

* That is acorns.

was killed by one of his own military tribunes. Such were the claims which Diocleſian had to the crown; and for a long time indeed no other were regarded.

He was a native of Dalmatia, and born in the little town of Dioclæa, from which he took his name. If what is alledged be true, that his father was a common labourer, and that he himſelf in his youth was the ſlave of a certain ſenator, called Anulinus, it is the higheſt compliment that can be paid to his memory, inaſmuch as he muſt have owed his elevation entirely to his own merit; for it is evident that he gained the eſteem, and conciliated the affections of the ſoldiers to ſuch a degree, as to make them forget his birth, and raiſe him to the throne. Lactantius, a chriſtian author, but a little too partial, pretends to affirm that Diocleſian was the greateſt coward in the empire. But it is extremely improbable, that the Roman ſoldiers ſhould chuſe a coward for their emperor, and that this coward ſhould have paſſed through all the different ranks of the army. Lactantius, no doubt, is much to be commended for his pious zeal againſt a heathen emperor, though it were to be wiſhed that he had been a little more prudent in his manner of expreſſing it.

He kept theſe fierce ſoldiers, who made and unmade their emperors with equal eaſe, in a ſtate of order and ſubjection for twenty years; which is another proof, notwithſtanding all that Lactantius hath ſaid to the contrary, that he was as great a prince as he was a brave ſoldier. Under his government the empire ſoon recovered its former ſplendour. The Gauls,

the Africans, the Egyptians, and the Engliſh, who ſeverally revolted, were all reduced to their former allegiance to the Roman empire; and the Perſians were entirely ſubdued Such a conſtant courſe of ſucceſs abroad, and a more happy adminiſtration at home; laws equally humane and wiſe, as may ſtill be ſeen in the Juſtinian code; Rome, Milan, Autun, Nicomedia, and Carthage, embelliſhed by his munificence, all conſpired to procure him the love and eſteem of both the eaſtern and weſtern parts of the empire; ſo that two hundred and forty years after his death, the firſt year of his reign was conſidered as the common æra, in the ſame manner as the foundation of Rome had formerly been. This is what is uſually called the æra of Diocleſian. Some affect to call it the æra of the martyrs: but that is an error of at leaſt eighteen years; for it is indiſputably certain that Diocleſian did not perſecute a ſingle Chriſtian for the firſt eighteen years of his reign. On the contrary, one of the firſt things he did, after aſcending the throne, was to grant a company of the pretorian guards to a Chriſtian, called Sebaſtian, who is likewiſe to be found in the catalogue of ſaints.

He was not afraid to admit a colleague on the throne, in the perſon of a ſoldier of fortune like himſelf. This was a friend of his own, one Maximilianus Hercules. The ſimilarity of their fortunes was the foundation of their friendſhip. Maximilianus Hercules was born of mean and poor parents, and like Diocleſian, had raiſed himſelf by his courage. Some people have found fault with Maximilianus for aſ-

ſuming the ſurname of Hercules, and with Diocleſian for taking that of Jovius*; not remembering that we every day ſee clergymen of the name of Hercules, and citizens who are called Cæſar or Auguſtus.

Diocleſian created two Cæſars more. The firſt was another Maximilianus, ſurnamed Galerius, who had originally been a ſhepherd. One would think that Diocleſian, the moſt haughty and ſupercilious man in the world, and the firſt that introduced the cuſtom of kiſſing the emperor's feet, took a pride in filling the throne of the Cæſars with men of the meaneſt extraction. A ſlave and two peaſants were now at the head of the empire, which, notwithſtanding, was never in a more flouriſhing condition.

The ſecond Cæſar he created was a perſon of illuſtrious birth, being by his mother the grand nephew of the emperor Claudius II. his name Conſtantius Chlorus. By theſe four princes was the empire governed. This aſſociation might have produced four civil wars in the ſpace of one year; but Diocleſian knew ſo well how to overawe his colleagues, that he always obliged them to pay him a proper reſpect, and to live in harmony among themſelves. Theſe princes, though dignified with the lofty title of Cæſars, were in reality no more than his prime miniſters. We even find him treating them with all the authority of an abſolute ſovereign; for when Cæſar Galerius, who had been beat by the Perſians, came to Meſopotamia to

* Jovius was no more than a Latin tranſlation of his Greek name Diocles.

give

give him an account of his defeat, he left him to walk for a mile together by the ſide of his chariot, and did not receive him into favour, till he had repaired his fault and retrieved his misfortune.

This Galerius had the good fortune to do in the ſucceeding year 297, in a very ſignal manner. He beat the king of Perſia in perſon. Theſe kings of Perſia had never ſince the battle of Arbella, been cured of the folly of bringing their wives, their daughters, and eunuchs to the field. Galerius took the king of Perſia's wife and family, as Alexander had done before, and treated them with the ſame reſpect. The peace was as glorious as the victory. The Perſians ceded five provinces to the Romans, extending from the ſandy deſerts of Palmyra to Armenia.

Diocleſian and Galerius went to Rome to exhibit a new kind of triumph. This was the firſt time that ever the Romans had ſeen the wife and children of a Perſian monarch in chains. The empire enjoyed peace and plenty. Diocleſian viſited all the provinces, and went from Rome to Egypt, Syria, and Aſia Minor. His uſual reſidence was not at Rome, but at Nicomedia, near the Euxine ſea; whether it was that he had choſen this place the more narrowly to watch the motions of the Perſians and Barbarians, or from an attachment to a retreat which he himſelf had embelliſhed.

It was in the midſt of theſe ſucceſſes that Galerius began to perſecute the Chriſtians. Why had they been allowed to live in peace ſo long? and why were they now perſecuted? Euſebius ſays, that one Marcellus a centurion

of Trajan's legion, which was then in Mauritania, happening to aſſiſt with his company at a feaſt that was given on account of the victory obtained by Galerius, threw down his military belt, his arms, and his bundle of vine-branches, which was the badge of his office, ſaying aloud that he was a Chriſtian, and that he would ſerve pagans no longer. The deſerter was capitally puniſhed by a council of war; and this is the firſt avowed inſtance of that famous perſecution. Certain it is, there were many Chriſtians in the Roman army; and the intereſt of the ſtate required that ſuch a public deſertion ſhould not paſs unpuniſhed. Marcellus's zeal, no doubt, was extremely pious; but unhappily it was far from being reaſonable. If in this feaſt, which was given in Mauritania, the gueſts eat any kinds of meat that had been offered to heathen gods, the law did not command Marcellus to partake with them; but neither ſurely did chriſtianity command him to give an example of ſedition; and there is no country in the world where ſuch an inexcuſable action would not be ſeverely puniſhed.

Nevertheleſs, after this adventure of Marcellus, it does not appear that the Chriſtians underwent any freſh perſecution till the year 303. At Nicomedia they had a ſuperb cathedral, oppoſite the palace, and even higher than it. Hiſtorians do not inform us why Galerius demanded of Diocleſian the inſtant demolition of this church; but they tell us that Diocleſian was a long time in coming to a reſolution; and that it was almoſt a year before he would give his conſent. After this, is it not ſomewhat

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ſtrange that Diocleſian ſhould be called a perſecutor? at laſt in 303 the church was demoliſhed, and an edict publiſhed, depriving the Chriſtians of all marks of honour, and of all places of truſt. From the very circumſtance of their being deprived of theſe, it is evident that they once poſſeſſed them. Some Chriſtian or other was ſo fooliſh as to pull down the imperial edict from the poſt to which it was affixed, and publicly tear it in pieces. This ſurely could not proceed from a principle of religion; but from a ſpirit of rebellion. Hence it is probable that an indiſcreet zeal, and which, in the language of ſcripture, was not according to knowledge, occaſioned this fatal perſecution. Some time after, the palace of Galerius was burnt; Galerius accuſed the Chriſtians of having ſet fire to it; and they, in their turn, accuſed him of having done it himſelf in order to find a pretext for blackening their character. The accuſation which Galerius brings againſt the Chriſtians ſeems to be unjuſt; that which they bring againſt him is no leſs ſo; for the edict being already publiſhed, what need had he of a new pretext? If, in fact, he wanted new arguments to engage Diocleſian in a perſecution, that would only be a freſh proof of Diocleſian's averſion to abandon the Chriſtians, whom he had always protected; as it would plainly ſhew that new motives were neceſſary to puſh him on to violent meaſures.

It cannot be denied that there were many Chriſtians put to the torture in the empire; but we can hardly reconcile with the lenity of the Roman laws all thoſe exquiſite torments and mutilations, thoſe plucked out tongues,

thoſe mangled and broiled limbs, and thoſe public inſults upon modeſty, inconſiſtent with common decency, which we every where read of. No Roman law ever enjoined ſuch puniſhments. The populace indeed, from their hatred to the Chriſtians, might poſſibly be carried to the commiſſion of ſome ſhocking cruelties; but we do not find that theſe cruelties had the ſanction either of the emperor or the ſenate.

The juſt grief of the Chriſtians probably vented itſelf in exaggerated complaints. The Acta Sincera informs us, that when the emperor was at Antioch, the pretor condemned to the flames a Chriſtian child called Romain; and that the Jews, who were preſent at the execution, wickedly fell a laughing, and ſaid, "We had once three children, Shadrach, Meſhech, and Abednego, who were not burnt though caſt into the fiery furnace; but theſe chriſtians burn faſt enough." But, to the utter confuſion of the Jews, a heavy ſhower of rain fell at that very inſtant, and extinguiſhed the pile, and the boy came out of it, ſaying, "where then is the fire?" The Acta Sincera add, that the emperor gave him his life; but that the judge ordered his tongue to be cut out. But is it credible that a judge ſhould cut out the tongue of a boy to whom the emperor had granted a pardon?

But what follows is ſtill more ſurpriſing. 'Tis pretended, that an old chriſtian phyſician, called Ariſton, who happened to be preſent with his anatomical knife, cut out the boy's tongue, in order to make his court to the pretor. Little Romain was immediately ſent to priſon, and the

the jailer aſked him the news. The child gave him a long account of the manner in which the old phyſician had cut out his tongue. It muſt be obſerved, that, before the operation, the boy ſtammered greatly in his ſpeech; but that he now ſpoke with ſurpriſing volubility. The jailer did not fail to acquaint the emperor with this miracle. The old phyſician was ſent for, and examined: he ſwore that he had performed the operation according to the rules of art, and ſhewed them the child's tongue, which he had kept in a box as a ſacred relick. "Give me the firſt man that comes in, ſays he: I will cut out his tongue in your majeſty's preſence, and then you ſhall ſee whether or not he can ſpeak." The propoſal was accepted, and a poor man pitched upon for the purpoſe. The phyſician cut out as much of his tongue as he had done of the boys, and the man expired in an inſtant.

I am willing to believe that the Acts which relate this fact, are as ſincere as their title imports; but ſurely they are more ſimple than ſincere: and it is ſtrange that Fleury, in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, ſhould relate ſuch a prodigious number of the like facts, which are more apt to occaſion ſcandal than to promote edification.

You muſt further obſerve, that in 303, when it is alledged that Diocleſian was preſent at this pretty adventure, he was actually at Rome, and ſpent the whole year in Italy. It is pretended that it was at Rome, and even in the emperor's preſence, that St. Geneſtus, the comedian, was converted on the ſtage, as he was playing a comedy againſt the Chriſtians. This

comedy plainly ſhews, that the taſte of Plautus and Terence was then extinct. What is now called comedy, or Italian farce, ſeem to have taken its riſe in thoſe times. St. Geneſtus acted a ſick perſon. The phyſician aſked him what was his diſeaſe. "I feel myſelf too heavy," ſays Geneſtus. "Would you chuſe to be pared a little," ſays the phyſician, "to make you more light?" "No," replies Geneſtus; "but I will die a Chriſtian, that ſo I may be raiſed with a handſome ſhape." Upon which the actors, dreſſed like prieſts and conjurers, came to baptize him. At that inſtant Geneſtus became a Chriſtian; and, inſtead of finiſhing his part, began to preach to the emperor and the people. This miracle is likewiſe contained in the Acta Sincera.

Certain it is, there were many real martyrs; but it is equally certain, that the provinces were not deluged with blood, as is commonly ſuppoſed. Mention is made of about two hundred martyrs that ſuffered in the whole extent of the Roman empire, during the laſt years of Dioclefian's reign; and it appears, even from the letters of Conſtantine himſelf, that Dioclefian had a leſs ſhare in this perſecution than Galerius *.

* Nevertheleſs he is ſaid to have entered ſo eagerly into the ſpirit of this perſecution, that he cauſed trophies to be erected, with inſcriptions (ſome of them ſtill extant in Spain) importing, that he had extended the Roman empire both in the Eaſt and Weſt, extinguiſhed the name of the Chriſtians, who had embroiled the republic, aboliſhed their ſuperſtition over all the earth, and augmented the worſhip of the gods.

Dio-

Diocleſian fell ſick in the courſe of this year, and, finding his ſtrength impaired, was the firſt that gave the world an example of abdicating an empire; though it is hard to ſay whether this abdication was voluntary or forced. What is certain is, that, having recovered his health, he lived nine years after, equally honoured and undiſturbed, in his country-houſe at Salona, the place of his birth. He was wont to ſay that he had never begun to live till the day of his retirement; and, when preſſed to remount the throne, he declared, that it was not worth the tranquillity he now enjoyed; and that he took more pleaſure in cultivating his garden, than he had ever done in governing the world. What is the natural inference from all theſe facts? Is it not that, notwithſtanding his many failings, reigned like a great emperor, and died like a philoſopher?

OF CONSTANTINE.

AT preſent I do not mean to ſpeak of that confuſion which overſpread the empire, after the abdication of Diocleſian. Upon his death, there were no leſs than ſix emperors at once. Conſtantine triumphed over them all; changed the religion of the empire; and was the author not only of that grand revolution, but likewiſe of all the other innovations that have ſince taken place in the Weſt. You want to know his real character. Aſk it of Ju-

Julian, of Zozimus, of Sozomenus, and of Victor. They will tell you, that, at firſt, he was a great prince; afterwards a public robber; and, laſt of all, a voluptuary, a debauchee, and a prodigal. They will paint him as an ambitious, cruel, and blood-thirſty tyrant. But aſk it, on the other hand, of Euſebius, of Gregory of Nazianze, and of Lanctantius, and they will tell you, that he was a man poſſeſſed of every virtue. Between theſe two extremes, how ſhall we diſcover the truth? By well-vouched facts, and by theſe alone. He had a father-in-law; him he obliged to hang himſelf. He had a brother-in-law; him he ſtrangled. He had a nephew, of twelve or thirteen years of age; his throat he cut. He had a ſon and heir; his head he took off. He had a wife; and her he ſtifled in a bath *. An old French author ſays, "that he loved to make a clean houſe."

If to theſe domeſtic crimes you add, that happening to be one day hunting a band of Franks that inhabited the banks of the Rhine, and having taken their kings, who were probably of the family of our Pharamond and Clodion the Hairy, he expoſed them to wild beaſts for his diverſion; you may then ſafely conclude, that he was not the moſt humane and polite man in the world.

Let us now take a curſory view of the principal events of his reign. His father, Conſtantius Chlorus, was in England, where he had borne the title of emperor for a few months.

* We have, in another place, made ſome remarks on this heavy charge.

Conſtantine was at Nicomedia with the emperor Galerius, from whom he aſked leave to go and viſit his father, who was ſick. Galerius granted his requeſt; and Conſtantine ſet out on the poſt-horſes of the empire, which were called Veredarii. It was no leſs dangerous, it ſeems, to be a poſt-horſe than to be a member of Conſtantine's family; for the moment he had finiſhed his journey, he cauſed all the horſes to be hamſtrung, for fear that Galerius ſhould revoke his permiſſion, and order him to return to Nicomedia. Finding his father on his death-bed, he procured himſelf to be declared emperor by the few Roman troops that were then in England.

A Roman emperor choſen at York, by five or ſix thouſand men, could not poſſibly be recognized at Rome, as lawfully elected: he wanted, at leaſt, the formula of *ſenatus populuſque Romanus*. The ſenate, the people, and the pretorian guards, unanimouſly fixed their choice upon Maxentius, ſon to Cæſar Maximilianus Hercules, himſelf already a Cæſar, and brother of that Fauſta whom Conſtantine had married, and afterwards put to death. This Maxentius is called a tyrant and uſurper by our hiſtorians, who are always ſure to ſide with the ſtrongeſt party. He protected the heathen religion, in oppoſition to Conſtantine, who already began to declare for the Chriſtians. A heathen, and vanquiſhed! how could he fail to be reckoned an abominable wretch?

Euſebius tells us, that when Conſtantine was going to Rome to attack Maxentius, both he and the whole army ſaw in the clouds the large ſtandard of the emperors, called Labarum, mounted

mounted with a large Greek R, with a St. Andrew's Croſs, and two Greek words, the meaning of which was, "By this you ſhall conquer." Some authors alledge, that this ſign appeared at Beſançon; others ſay that it was at Cologn; ſome at Treves, and others at Troye. Strange! that heaven ſhould explain itſelf in Greek in all theſe different countries. It would have been more natural, at leaſt in the judgment of ſhort-ſighted mortals, for this ſign to have made its appearance in Italy on the day of battle; but then the inſcription muſt have been in Latin. A learned antiquary, of the name of Laiſel, hath refuted the authenticity of this phænomenon; in conſequence of which he hath been branded with the appellation of an infidel.

After the victory which Conſtantine obtained, the ſenate were not backward in adoring the conqueror, and execrating the memory of the conquered. They immediately ſtripped the triumphal arch of Marcus Aurelius to adorn that of Conſtantine, to whom they likewiſe erected a golden ſtatue; an honour which, before that time, had never been paid to any but the gods. This he received, notwithſtanding the Labarum; as alſo the title of high prieſt, which he retained all his life. His firſt care, according to Nazarius and Zozimus, was to extirpate the whole race of the tyrant, together with his principal friends; after which he aſſiſted, with great humanity, at the ſpectacles and public games.

The old Dioclefian was then dying in his retreat at Salona. Conſtantine need not have been in ſuch a hurry to demoliſh his ſtatue at Rome.

Rome. He might have remembered, if he pleaſed, that this emperor had been his father's benefactor, and had even been the means of raiſing him to the throne. Having thus vanquiſhed Maxentius, his next buſineſs was to get rid of Licinius, his brother-in-law, who was dignified with the title of Auguſtus as well as himſelf; and Licinius, on his part, reſolved to make away with Conſtantine, if he poſſibly could. But, as their quarrels were not yet come to an open rupture, they granted, conjointly, at Milan, in 313, the famous edict of liberty of conſcience. "We give every man," ſay they, "a liberty of following whatever religion he pleaſes, that ſo we may draw down the bleſſing of heaven upon us and our ſubjects: and we declare, that we have granted the Chriſtians a free and full permiſſion of profeſſing their religion, provided that every other perſon ſhall enjoy the ſame privileges, that ſo the peace of our reign may not be diſturbed."

Conſtantine was not as yet a Chriſtian, any more than his colleague Licinius. He had ſtill another emperor or tyrant to deſtroy, one Maximinus, a determined pagan. Licinius fought Maximinus before he attacked Conſtantine. Heaven was ſtill more propitious to him, than it had ever been to Conſtantine himſelf. The latter had only the appearance of a ſtandard; the former had that of an angel. This angel taught him a prayer, by virtue of which he muſt undoubtedly conquer the barbarian Maximinus. Licinius put the prayer in writing, recited it three times to his army, and obtained a complete victory. Had this Licinius, brother-in law to Conſtantine, enjoyed a hap-

a happy reign, we ſhould have heard of nothing but his angel; but Conſtantine having cauſed him to be hanged, cut the throat of his young ſon, and rendered himſelf an abſolute ſovereign, we now hear of nothing but of Conſtantine's Labarum.

It is commonly believed that he put his eldeſt ſon Criſpus, and his wife Fauſta, to death, the ſame year that he aſſembled the council of Nice. Zozimus and Sozomenus pretend, that when the heathen prieſts told him that his crimes were inexpiable, he immediately made open profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and demoliſhed ſeveral temples in the Eaſt. It is not likely that the heathen prieſts would neglect ſuch a favourable opportunity of bringing back to their party the high prieſt, by whom they had been abandoned: and yet there might poſſibly be amongſt them ſome rigid fanaticks; for ſuch are every where to be found. But, what is ſtill more ſurpriſing, Conſtantine the Chriſtian underwent no penance for his parricides. It was at Rome that he committed theſe barbarous crimes, and from that time he could never endure to reſide in it: he therefore left it intirely, and went to build the city of Conſtantinople. How can he preſume to ſay, as he does in one of his reſcripts, that he transferred the ſeat of the empire to Conſtantinople by the expreſs orders of God? Is not this at once to mock the Deity, and to inſult the common ſenſe of mankind? Had God given him any orders, would it not have been not to aſſaſſinate his wife and ſon?

Diocleſian had ſet the example of tranſferring the ſeat of the empire towards the borders

lers of Aſia. The Romans, enſlaved and degenerated as they already were, could not endure the pride, the deſpotiſm, and the effeminacy of the Aſiaticks. The emperors would never have dared to introduce the cuſtom of making their ſubjects kiſs their feet at Rome, nor to fill their palaces with crowds of eunuchs. Dioclesian began at Nicomedia to put the Roman court upon the ſame footing with that of the Perſian monarchs; and Conſtantine accompliſhed the pernicious ſcheme at Conſtantinople. From that time Rome loſt her ancient ſpirit, and gradually fell into decay; and thus Conſtantine gave the moſt fatal blow that ever was given to the Roman empire.

Of all the emperors, he was certainly the moſt deſpotic. Auguſtus had left the Romans, at leaſt, the ſhadow of liberty. Tiberius, and even Nero himſelf, had cajoled the ſenate and the people. But Conſtantine was above condeſcending to theſe political arts. By diſbanding, immediately upon his elevation to the throne, the brave pretorian ſoldiers, who conſidered themſelves as maſters of the Roman emperors, he eſtabliſhed his authority upon a ſolid foundation. He made an intire ſeparation between the ſword and the gown. The depoſitaries of the laws, now cruſhed by the military power, were, at beſt, but enſlaved lawyers. The Roman provinces were governed on a new plan *. The great aim of Conſtantine was

* The empire was divided into four general governments, each under the authority of a prefectus prætorii; though he had no power over the troops, the command of which was given to provincial generals, who had under them

was to be abſolute in every thing; and, in fact, he was ſo both in church and ſtate. We ſee him convoking and opening the council of Nice; entering amidſt the fathers, covered with jewels and adorned with a diadem; taking the firſt place, and baniſhing indiſcriminately one while Arius, and at another St. Athanaſius. He put himſelf at the head of Chriſtianity, without being a Chriſtian; for, in thoſe times, none but ſuch as were baptized were diſtinguiſhed by that appellation; ſo that, in effect, Conſtantine was only a catechumen. Even the cuſtom of waiting the approach of death, in order to be dipt in the water of regeneration, began to be diſcontinued by ſome individuals. If Conſtantine imagined, that, by deferring his baptiſm, he might commit all manner of crimes with impunity, in hopes of obtaining a full pardon at laſt, it was very unlucky for the reſt of the world, that ſuch an opinion ſhould have been put into the head of a man ſo powerful and deſpotic.

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them counts and dukes. Each general government was ſubdivided into dioceſes, the governors of which were ſtiled vicars of the prefecti prætorii; and every dioceſe was compoſed of ſeveral petty provinces, ruled by conſulars, preſidents, or correctors. This ſubdiviſion had been firſt made by Dioclefian.

OF JULIAN.

LET us ſuppoſe, for a moment, that Julian abandoned the heathen for the chriſtian religion. Let us next conſider him as a man, a philoſopher, and an emperor; and then let us try if we can find a prince of a more excellent character. Within theſe few years his name was never mentioned without the epithet of Apoſtate; and it is, perhaps, one of the greateſt efforts of reaſon, that we have at length ceaſed to diſtinguiſh him by that opprobrious appellation. The ſtudy of the liberal arts has inſpired the learned with the ſpirit of toleration. Who would believe, that, in one of the numbers of the Paris Mercury in 1741, the author ſhould ſeverely cenſure a public writer, for being ſo much wanting to common decency, as to call this emperor "Julian the Apoſtate." Had any one, an hundred years ago, refuſed to call him an apoſtate, he himſelf would have been ſure to incur the imputation of atheiſm.

What is equally certain and ſurpriſing is, that if you lay aſide the conſideration of his unhappy change, and neither follow him to the chriſtian churches, nor the pagan temples; but obſerve him narrowly in his houſe, in the camp, in battle, in his manners, his conduct, and writings; you will find him equal, in every reſpect, to Marcus Aurelius. And hence, perhaps, you may be convinced that this man, who is commonly repreſented as an abominable wretch, is nevertheleſs the firſt, or, at leaſt, the

the ſecond of mankind. Always ſober, and always temperate; keeping no miſtreſſes; lying upon a bear's ſkin, and in that ſimple couch giving but a few hours to ſleep; dividing his time between ſtudy and buſineſs; generous, friendly, and modeſt: had he been a private man, he would have been the object of univerſal admiration.

If we conſider him as a hero, we ſhall find him always at the head of his troops, reeſtabliſhing military diſcipline without ſeverity, and equally beloved and reſpected by his ſoldiers; leading his armies almoſt always on foot, and ſharing with them in all their dangers; ſucceſsful in all his expeditions; and at laſt ending his days in gaining a complete victory over the Perſians. His death was that of a hero, and his laſt words were thoſe of a philoſopher. "I chearfully ſubmit," ſaid he, "to the eternal decrees of heaven; convinced that he who would wiſh to live when he muſt die, is more cowardly than him who would wiſh to die when he ought to live.". He continued, to his laſt hour, to diſcourſe on the immortality of the ſoul. No fruitleſs complaints, no unmanly fears; he talked of nothing but ſubmiſſion to the Divine Providence. Conſider, now, that the perſon who died thus had been an emperor for thirty-two years, and then ſay if you ought to inſult his memory?

If we view him as an emperor, we find him refuſing the title of *dominus*, to which Conſtantine aſpired; relieving his ſubjects, diminiſhing the taxes, encouraging the arts, reducing from ſeventy ounces to three or four hundred marks thoſe crowns of gold which his predeceſſors

ceſſors exacted from all the towns, enforcing the execution of the laws, keeping his officers and miniſters to their duty, and preventing all kind of bribery and corruption.

Ten chriſtian ſoldiers conſpire his death: they are diſcovered, and Julian forgives them. The people of Antioch, equally inſolent and effeminate, inſult him: he puniſhes them with his uſual greatneſs of ſoul; and, capable as he was of making them feel the whole weight of imperial power, he only makes them ſenſible of the ſuperiority of his genius. Compare with this the puniſhments which Theodoſius (now almoſt ſainted) inflicts at Antioch: all the citizens of Theſſalonica butchered, on an occaſion of much the ſame nature; and then ſay, which of the two men you think the moſt virtuous.

Gregory of Nazianzene, and Theodoret, ſeem to conſider it as their duty to blacken the character of this prince, becauſe he abandoned the chriſtian religion; never remembering that one of the moſt glorious triumphs of this religion was to withſtand the efforts of a great and wiſe man, after having reſiſted ſo many tyrants. One of theſe authors ſays, that he filled Antioch with blood, from a ſpirit of cruel revenge. How could a fact ſo notorious eſcape the obſervation of all other hiſtorians? On the contrary, it is well knwn that he ſhed no blood at Antioch, but the blood of victims. The other has the impudence to affirm, that when he was juſt expiring, he threw his blood againſt heaven, and exclaimed, "Thou haſt conquered, O Galilean!" How, in the name of wonder, could ſuch a ridiculous ſtory ever gain credit?

Or

Or is ſuch an action, and ſuch words, conſiſtent with the reſt of his character?

But perhaps it may be aſked, by men of more ſenſe than theſe defamers of Julian, how it was poſſible for a ſtateſman, a genius, and a true philoſopher, as Julian confeſſedly was, to abandon Chriſtianity, in which he had been educated, in favour of the heathen religion, to the abſurd and ridiculous nature of which he could not be a ſtranger? If Julian, ſay they, liſtened too much to his reaſon in examining the myſteries of Chriſtianity, he ought, one would think, to have liſtened ſtill more to that reaſon in examining the fables of the heathens.

Perhaps, by tracing him through the courſe of his life, and obſerving his character with greater attention, we ſhall be able to diſcover the true cauſe of that ſtrong averſion he had to Chriſtianity. Conſtantine, his grand-uncle, the firſt emperor that embraced the new religion, had embrued his hands in the blood of his wife, his ſon, his brother-in-law, his nephew, and his father-in-law. Conſtantine's three ſons began their bloody reign by butchering their uncle and their couſins. From that time nothing was to be ſeen but murders and civil wars. Julian's father and eldeſt brother, all his relations, and even himſelf, though a child, were condemned to death by his uncle Conſtantius. Happily, he eſcaped the general maſſacre. His firſt years were paſt in exile; and at laſt he owed the preſervation of his life, his fortune, and the title of Cæſar, to the good offices of the empreſs Euſebia, wife to his uncle Conſtantius, who, after having had the cruelty

to

to baniſh him in his infancy, had now the imprudence to make him a Cæſar, and afterwards the ſtill greater imprudence to provoke him by perſecution.

He was an eye-witneſs of the intolerable inſolence with which a biſhop behaved to Euſebia, his benefactreſs. This was one Leontius, biſhop of Tripoly. He ſent the empreſs word, "that he would not pay her a viſit, unleſs ſhe would promiſe to receive him in a manner ſuitable to his epiſcopal character; to wit, that ſhe ſhould meet him at the door, incline her body, in order to receive his benediction, and not preſume to ſit down till he ſhould give her leave." The heathen prieſts behaved to the empreſſes in a very different manner. This pride, ſo oppoſite to the true ſpirit of Chriſtianity, could not fail to make a deep impreſſion on the mind of a young man, already in love with philoſophy and ſimplicity of manners.

He found himſelf, it is true, in a chriſtian family; but it was a family noted for parricide. He ſaw biſhops at court; but theſe biſhops were haughty and inſolent, artful and cunning, and perpetually anathematizing one another. The two ſects of Arius and Athanaſius filled the empire with bloodſhed and confuſion; whereas the heathens, on the other hand, had no religious controverſies. We may therefore naturally ſuppoſe, that Julian, educated as he was by heathen philoſophers, and daily accuſtomed to hear their lectures, was thereby the more confirmed in that unhappy averſion to Chriſtianity, with which the abuſe of it had at firſt inſpired him. Politicians were no more ſurpriſed to ſee Julian forſake the chriſtian for

the heathen religion, than to ſee Conſtantine abandon Paganiſm for Chriſtianity. It is probable, that both of them changed for reaſons of ſtate, and that theſe reaſons concurred with ſtoical pride in determining the mind of Julian. The heathen religion had no dogmas: it demanded nothing but ſacrifices; nor did it even require theſe under very ſevere penalties, the prieſts not daring to form a religious government in the heart of the civil. Theſe and the like motives might eaſily induce a man of Julian's character to take a ſtep, which, in other reſpects, is ſo unjuſtifiable. He wanted a party: had he piqued himſelf merely on his ſtoical character, he would have had the prieſts and falſe zealots of both religions to oppoſe him. The people would never have allowed a prince to confine himſelf to the ſole adoration of a pure Being, and to the practice of juſtice. He was, therefore, obliged to pitch upon one of theſe contending parties; and Julian probably ſubmitted to the pagan ceremonies with no more ſincerity than moſt princes and great men go to places of public worſhip, to which they are led by the people, and frequently forced to appear what they are not. The Turkiſh Sultan muſt bleſs Omar; the Perſian Sophi muſt bleſs Ali; and Marcus Aurelius himſelf was initiated in the Eleuſinian myſteries.

We ought not, therefore, to be ſurpriſed that Julian degraded his reaſon ſo far as to condeſcend to the obſervance of ſuperſtitious rites; but we cannot help being filled with the higheſt indignation at Theodoret, the only author who ſays that he ſacrificed a woman in the temple of the Moon at Carres. This infamous

ſtory deſerves to be ranked in the ſame catalogue with that abſurd fiction of Ammianus, who ſays that the genius of the empire appeared to Julian before his death; and with that no leſs ridiculous falſhood, that when Julian attempted to rebuild the temple of Jeruſalem, globes of fire iſſued from the earth, and deſtroyed the works and workmen.

Iliacos intra muros peccatur & extra.

The Chriſtians and Pagans have been equally induſtrious in inventing and propagating ſtories about Julian; with this only difference, that the ſtories of the Chriſtians are all defamatory. Can any one believe, that a philoſopher could ſacrifice a woman to the moon, and tear out her entrails with his own hands? Can ſuch brutality dwell in the mind of a rigid Stoick?

Julian never put one Chriſtian to death. It is true, he granted them no favours; but neither did he perſecute them*. As a juſt emperor, he left them to enjoy their eſtates; and as a philoſopher, he wrote againſt them. He forbade them to teach in their ſchools the works of profane authors, which they endeavoured to decry; but ſurely this was not perſecution. He allowed them the free exerciſe of their religion, and hindered them from deſtroying one another by their bloody quarrels. This was

* Notwithſtanding this elegant apology, Julian will be ſtill conſidered as a perſecutor of the Chriſtians, againſt whom he exerciſed acts of cruelty and injuſtice on many occaſions.

rather to be their protector. They ought, therefore, to load him with no other reproach than that of abandoning their religion, and of deceiving and hurting himself: and yet they have found means to render execrable to all posterity a prince whose name, but for his change of religion, the only blemish in his character, would have been dear to mankind.

M. de

M. de VOLTAIRE'S

SPEECH,

On his RECEPTION into the FRENCH ACADEMY.

With NOTES.

Delivered on Monday the 9th of May, 1746.

ADVERTISEMENT

OF

THE EDITORS.

THOUGH an academical oration is commonly no more than a vain ceremony full of hackneyed compliments, and ſtuffed with the elogy of a predeceſſor, who perhaps was a man of but very mean parts; yet this diſcourſe, which ſeveral gentlemen have begged us to reprint, ought to be exempted from the common law, which condemns to oblivion moſt of theſe formal and unmeaning pieces. The ſpeech, it is preſumed, will be found to have ſome merit, and the notes are uſeful.

GENTLEMEN,

YOUR founder transfuſed into your eſtabliſhment all the greatneſs and dignity of his own ſoul, by ordaining that you ſhould always be free and equal. And indeed he acted wiſely in raiſing above dependance thoſe who were above all ſelfiſh and intereſted views, and who, as generous as himſelf, did letters the honour which they ſo well deſerve, namely, that of ſtudying them for their own ſake *. It was to be feared, that the ardour of proſecuting theſe noble ſtudies might one day be relaxed. In order, therefore, to preſerve it in its full vigour, you made a law, by which you bound yourſelves to admit none as members of your academy but ſuch as reſided in Paris. From this law, however, you have wiſely deviated in receiving in your number thoſe extraordinary geniuſes who were called elſewhere by their honourable employments, but who by their ſenſible or ſublime performances were always preſent with you; for it would be to violate

* The French academy is the oldeſt eſtabliſhment of that kind in France. It was at firſt compoſed of ſome men of letters, who met together for the ſake of mutual converſation. It is not divided into honorary and penſionary members. Its privileges are merely honorary, ſuch as that enjoyed by the commenſals of the palace, of not being obliged to plead out of Paris; that of addreſſing the king in a body with the ſuperior courts; and that of being accountable to none but the king.

the ſpirit of a law not to tranſgreſs the letter of it in favour of great men. If the late preſident Bouhier, after having flattered himſelf with the pleaſing hopes of conſecrating the reſt of his days to your company, was obliged to paſs them at a conſiderable diſtance, both he and the academy were comforted for their mutual loſs, by reflecting that he cultivated your ſciences with his uſual induſtry in the city of Dijon, which hath produced ſo many great men *, and where genius ſeems to be one of the characteriſtics of the citizens.

He put us in mind of thoſe times when the moſt auſtere magiſtrates, accompliſhed like him in the knowledge of the laws, unbended their minds from the cares of ſtate, by indulging in the amuſements of literature. What pitiful wretches are thoſe who deſpiſe theſe agreeable ſtudies; who place a kind of ſolitary grandeur in ſhutting themſelves up within the narrow circle of their own employments! Do they not know that Cicero, after having filled the firſt place in the world, ſtill continued to plead the cauſes of his fellow citizens, wrote on the nature of the gods, converſed with men of letters, went to the theatre, condeſcended to cultivate the friendſhip of Æſopus and Roſcius, and left little minds to enjoy their ſolemn gravity, which is only the maſk of ignorance and weakneſs?

The preſident Bouhier was a man of great learning; but did not reſemble thoſe uſeleſs and

* Meſſieurs de la Monnoye, Bouhire, Lantin, and above all, the eloquent Boſſuet, biſhop of Meaux, who is commonly conſidered as the laſt father of the church.

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unſociable ſcholars, who neglect the ſtudy of their own tongue to acquire an imperfect knowledge of ancient languages; who think they have a right to deſpiſe their own times, becauſe they imagine they have ſome little acquaintance with former ages; who admire a paſſage in Æſchylus, but have never enjoyed the pleaſure of ſhedding a tear at our own plays. He tranſlated Petronius's poem on the civil war; not that he conſidered that declamation, which is full of falſe thoughts, as nearly equal to the chaſte and elegant ſublimity of Virgil: on the contrary, he knew that Petronius's ſatire *, though diſtinguiſhed here and there by charming ſtrokes of wit, is no more than the whimſical production of a young man of mean condition, whoſe manners and ſtile were alike irregular. Some men, who pretend to be the moſt perfect maſters of taſte and pleaſure, eſteem the whole of Petronius's works; but Mr. Bouhier, a man of greater judgment, does not even eſteem all that he tranſlated. It is one proof, among many others, how much

* St. Evremont admires Petronius, becauſe he takes him for a great courtier, and believed himſelf to be ſuch. This was the folly of the times. St. Evremont and ſeveral others aſſert that Nero is repreſented under the name of Trimalchion: but can an old fat and ridiculous farmer of the revenues, and his old wife, an impertinent citizen, be ſaid to reſemble a young emperor, and his young ſpouſe Octavia, or the young Popæa? Can the debaucheries and petty thefts of a few roguiſh ſcholars be ſaid to reſemble the pleaſures of the maſter of the world? Petronius, the author of the ſatire, is evidently a young man of ſpirit, who made a figure among a ſet of obſcure debauchees, and not the conſul Petronius.

reaſon hath been improved in the preſent age, that a tranſlator is no longer a blind admirer of his author; but can treat him with the ſame impartiality as he would treat a cotemporary. He exerciſed his talents on this poem, on the hymn to Venus, and on Anacreon, in order to ſhew that the poets ought to be tranſlated into verſe; an opinion which he defended with great warmth; nor will it be thought ſtrange that my ſentiments are the ſame with his.

Allow me, gentlemen, to enter a little more deeply into theſe literary diſcuſſions: my doubts before ſuch learned judges as you will be equal to deciſions. In this manner I may poſſibly contribute to the improvement of the arts; and I had much rather pronounce in your preſence an uſeful than an eloquent diſcourſe.

Why is it that Homer, Theocritus, Lucretius, Virgil, and Horace, have been happily tranſlated into Italian and Engliſh*? why is it that theſe nations have none of the ancient poets in proſe, and that we have none of them in verſe? I will endeavour to aſſign the reaſon.

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* Horace is tranſlated into Italian verſe by Palavicini; Virgil by Hannibal Caro; Ovid by Auguillara; and Theocritus by Ricolini. The Italians have five good tranſlations of Anacreon. With regard to the Engliſh, Dryden hath tranſlated Virgil and Juvenal; Pope, Homer; Creech, Lucretius †, &c.

† Of Virgil there are three Engliſh tranſlations beſides that by Dryden, viz. Lauderdale's, Trap's, and Pitt's; and we expect ſoon to ſee a fourth complete tranſlation of the Æneid by Mr. Strahan. We have alſo Theocritus tranſlated by Creech, and Horace by Francis.

To

To ſurmount the difficulties that oppoſe us in the execution of any work, conſtitutes no inconſiderable part of its merit. No great atchievements without great labour; nor is there a nation in the world where it is more difficult to transfuſe the true ſpirit of ancient poetry than it is in ours. The firſt poets formed the genius of their language. The Greeks and the Romans at firſt employed poetry in painting all the ſenſible objects of nature. Homer deſcribes whatever ſtrikes the eye. The French, who have not yet begun to improve any of the more ſublime kinds of poetry, except the dramatic, neither could nor ought to deſcribe any thing that does not affect the ſoul. We have inſenſibly debarred ourſelves from all thoſe objects which other nations have ventured to paint. There is nothing that Danté does not deſcribe after the example of the ancients. He accuſtomed the Italians to expreſs every thing; but how could we in the preſent age imitate the author of the Georgick, who particularly mentions all the inſtruments of agriculture? In effect we hardly know them; and our effeminate pride, bred and nouriſhed in the boſom of that peace and luxury which we enjoy in our cities, unhappily affixes a mean idea to theſe rural labours, and to the deſcription of thoſe uſeful arts which the lords and legiſlators of the univerſe cultivated with their own victorious hands. Had our good poets known how to expreſs little things with propriety, our tongue would have added that merit, which is far from being inconſiderable, to the advantage of having become the firſt language in the world for the charms of converſation, and the expreſſion of

ſentiment. The language of the heart, and the ſtile of the theatre have entirely prevailed; they have embelliſhed the French tongue; but have confined its beauties within too narrow limits.

And when I ſay, gentlemen, that the great poets have determined the genius of languages*, I ad-

* It is impoſſible in a ceremonial diſcourſe to enter into the reaſons of this difficulty that attends our poetry. It proceeds from the idiom of the language; for though M. de la Motte, and ſeveral others after him, have aſſerted in full academy, that languages have no idioms, yet it appears demonſtrable that each language hath its own peculiar idiom.

This idiom is its fitneſs to expreſs certain ideas with propriety, and its unfitneſs to expreſs others with preciſion. Both theſe peculiarities ariſe, 1. From the terminations of words. 2. From auxiliary verbs and participles. 3. From the greater or leſs number of rhimes. 4. From the length or ſhortneſs of words. 5. From the greater or leſs variation of caſes. 6. From articles and pronouns. 7. From eliſions. 8. From inverſions, 9. From the quantity of ſyllables. And, in fine, from an infinite number of minute circumſtances, which can only be perceived by thoſe who have thoroughly ſtudied the principles of a language,

1. The terminations of words, ſuch as *perdre, vaincre, un coin, ſuere, raſle, crotte, perdu, ſourdre, fief, coffre,* theſe harſh ſyllables grate the ear, a property for which all the northern tongues are remarkable.

2. Auxiliary verbs and participles. *Victi hoſtibus,* "*les enemis ayant été vaincus.*" There are four words for two. "Læſo & invicto milite." This is the incription of the invalids at Berlin: were we to tranſlate it into French, it would be *pour les ſoldats qui ont été bleſſés & qui n'ont pas été vaincus*: how flat and languid! Hence it appears that Latin is more proper for inſcriptions than French.

3. The number of rhimes. Open a dictionary of Italian rhimes, and one of French rhimes, you will always find a greater

I advance nothing that is not well known to you. The Greeks did not begin to write hiſtory

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greater number of rhimes in the Italian; and you will further remark, that in the French there are twenty low and ridiculous rhimes for two that can enter into the noble and majeſtic ſtile.

4. The length and ſhortneſs of words. It is this that renders a language more or leſs proper for the expreſſion of certain maxims, and the meaſure of certain verſes.

We have never been able to tranſlate into French in one good verſe:

Quanto ſi moſtra men tanto è più bella.

Nor have the Italians ever been able to tranſlate into good verſes:

Tel brille au ſecond rang, qui s'eclipſe au premier.
C'eſt un poids bien peſant qu'un nom trop tôt fameux.

5. The greater or leſs variation of caſes. *Mon pére, de mon pére, à mon pére*; meus pater, mei patris, meo patri; this is clear and diſtinct,

6. Articles and pronouns. "De ipſius negotio ei loquebatur." *Con elle parlava dell' affaire di lui*; *il lui parlait de ſon affaire*. No amphibology in the Latin. It is almoſt unavoidable in the French. We know not whether *ſon affaire* is that of the man who ſpeaks, or to him to whom the ſpeech is addreſſed: the pronoun *il* is cut off in the Latin, and it is it that makes the French and the Italian ſo flat and inſipid.

7. Elliſions.

Canto l'arme pietoſe, e il capitano.

We cannot ſay,

"Chantons la Piété et la virtu heureuſe."

8. Inverſions. *Céſar cultiva tous les arts utiles*; we cannot turn this phraſe in any other manner. In Latin it can be expreſſed in twenty different ways:

"Cæſar omnes utiles artes coluit."

What a ſurpriſing difference!

tory till four hundred years after Homer's time; and it was from that great painter of nature that their tongue derived that ſuperiority which it afterwards obtained over all the languages of Europe and Aſia. Among the Romans, Terence was the firſt that expreſſed himſelf with elegance and purity; and it was Danté, and after him Petrarch, that gave the Italian tongue that charming ſweetneſs which it hath ever ſince preſerved. It is to Lopez de Vega * that the Spaniſh owes its pomp and majeſty; and it was Shakeſpeare †, rude and unpoliſhed as he was, that infuſed into the Engliſh language that ſtrength and energy, which they have never ſince been able to increaſe, without overſtraining, and conſequently without weakening it. Whence proceeds this grand effort of poetry, by which it forms and finally fixes the genius of nations, and of their languages? The cauſe of it is evident: the firſt good verſes, or even

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9. The quantity of ſyllables. This is the ſoul of harmony. The long and ſhort ſyllables in the Latin form a truly muſical cadence. The more of this property any language poſſeſſes, it is the more harmonious. Obſerve the Italian verſes, and you will find that the penult is always long:

Capitâno, mâno, ſêno chriſto, acquiſto.

From all theſe particulars we may ſafely conclude that every tongue hath his own peculiar idiom, which men of ſuperior parts diſcover firſt, and ſoon demonſtrate the others, by unfolding the true genius of the language.

* The ſtyle of Lopez de Vega is not more pure and ſtately than that of Cervantes, who was his cotemporary, and indeed his ſenior in writing.

† There is no Engliſh writer more chaſte, energic, and copious than Spencer, who was prior to Shakeſpear.

ſuch

ſuch as are but ſeemingly ſo, are deeply imprinted on the memory by the aid of harmonious numbers. Their bold and natural turns become familiar; and men, who are all born with a deſire and capacity of imitation, inſenſibly acquire the ſame manner of expreſſion, and even the ſame way of thinking with thoſe whoſe daring imaginations at firſt got the aſcendency over the minds of others. Will you not agree with me, gentlemen, when I ſay that the true merit and reputation of our tongue began with the author of the Cid, and of Cinna *?

Before him Montagne was the only writer that engaged the attention of the few foreigners who underſtood the French; but Montagne's ſtile is neither pure nor correct, nor accurate, nor noble. He is alike remarkable for eaſe and energy: he expreſſes great things with plainneſs and ſimplicity; and it is this ſimplicity with which we are charmed; we become fond of the author's character; we are pleaſed to find our own picture in what he ſays of himſelf; we love to converſe with him, and to change our diſcourſe and opinions with him. I have heard many people admire the language of Montagne; but it is his imagination that we ought to admire: the former is bold and daring; but the latter is far from being ſo.

Marot, who formed his language by that of Montagne, is hardly known beyond the limits of his native country; and even among us he is chiefly valued for ſome ſimple tales,

* Pierre Corneille.

and

and ſome licentious epigrams, the merit of which conſiſts almoſt always in the ſubject; and it was owing to our injudicious regard for this trifling merit that our language remained ſo long unimproved. Poems, hiſtory, and books of morality, were all written in the tragic ſtile. The judicious Deſpreaux ſays, *Imiter de Marot l'elegant badinage.* I am inclined to think that he would have ſaid *le naif badenage*, were it not that this word, which is more proper, would have rendered his verſe leſs harmonious. In effect we have no good performances but ſuch as force their way into foreign nations, and are there ſtudied and tranſlated; but into what foreign language has ever Marot been tranſlated?

Our tongue, for a long time after him, was no better than a familiar jargon, in which we were ſometimes happy enough to compoſe ſome pieces of humour; but when humour is our only merit, we can never expect to be admired by other nations.

Enfin Malherbe vint, & le premier en France
Fit ſentir dans les vers une geſte cadence,
D'un mot mis en ſa place enſeigna le pouvoir.

At laſt great Malherbe came, and firſt taught France the art
To rough unpoliſh'd verſe juſt cadence to impart.
Of words in order plac'd he ſhew'd the mighty power.

If Malherbe was the firſt that ſhewed what happy effects might be produced by the great art of well-placed words, and well-turned periods,

riods, he muſt be allowed to have been the firſt that was elegant. But are a few harmonious ſtanzas ſufficient to engage ſtrangers to cultivate our language? They read that admirable poem the Jeruſalemme Liberata, Orlando Furioſo, Paſtor Fido, and the beautiful pieces of Petrarch: and can they rank with theſe maſterly performances a ſmall number of French verſes, well wrote indeed; but feeble, and almoſt deſtitute of imagination?

Thus the French tongue would have for ever remained in its former ſtate of mediocrity, without one of thoſe extraordinary men, who are made to change and elevate the ſpirit of a whole nation. It was the greateſt of your firſt academicians, it was Corneille alone, that began to make our language be admired by foreigners, at the very time that cardinal Richelieu began to make the crown to be reſpected by the neighbouring nations. Both of them ſpread our glory throughout Europe. Corneille was ſucceeded, I will not ſay by men of greater genius, but by better writers. A man aroſe, who was, at once, more animated and more correct; leſs various indeed, but therefore leſs unequal; ſometimes as ſublime, and always as majeſtic, without running into bombaſt: an enemy to declamation, he ſpoke to the heart with more truth, and with more charms *.

One of their cotemporaries, incapable perhaps of thoſe ſublime conceptions which elevate the ſoul, and of thoſe delicate feelings which melt it into pity, but made to enlighten and direct thoſe whom nature had bleſſed with both

* Racine.

theſe qualities, laborious, ſevere, accurate, pure, harmonious, and who, in fine, might be ſaid to be the poet of reaſon, began unhappily by writing ſatires; but ſoon after equalled, and perhaps ſurpaſſed, Horace in his Moral Epiſtles, and his Art of Poetry. He gave precepts and examples; and was at laſt convinced, that the art of inſtructing, when executed with a maſterly hand, ſucceeds better than the art of ſatirizing, becauſe ſatire dies with thoſe who have been the victims of its rage; whereas reaſon and virtue are eternal † You had, in every branch of literature, that crowd of great men which nature produced, as in the age of Leo X. and in that of Anguſtus. Then it was that foreigners began to read our authors with avidity; and, thanks in part to cardinal Richlieu, they adopted our language, as they are now eager to deck themſelves with the manufactures of our ingenious artiſts, for which we are indebted to the labours of the great Colbert.

A monarch admired by all men for his five victories, and ſtill more by the learned on account of his great knowledge, hath choſen our language for his own, and hath adopted it into his court and his dominions: he ſpeaks it with that energy and propriety which ſtudy alone can never beſtow, and which is the true mark of genius. Not only does he ſtudy it: he even ſometimes embelliſhes and improves it; for great ſouls will always ſeize thoſe happy turns and expreſſions which can never occur to weak minds §. Stockholm is bleſſed with a new Chriſ-

† Boileau.

§ The late king of Sweden.

tina,

tina, equal to the firſt in genius, ſuperior in every thing elſe; and ſhe pays the ſame honour to our language. The French is ſtudied at Rome, where it was formerly deſpiſed. It is now become as familiar to the ſovereign pontiff as the learned languages, in which he writes when he inſtructs the chriſtian world which he governs. Several Italian cardinals have wrote in French, in the Vatican, with as much elegance as if they had been born at Verſailles. Your works, gentlemen, have forced their way to that capital of the moſt remote empire of Aſia and Europe, and the moſt extenſive in the univerſe; to that city, which, about forty years ago, was a deſert *, inhabited only by wild beaſts: there your dramatic pieces are now repreſented; and the ſame good taſte which introduced the Italian muſic into the city of Peter the Great, and of his worthy daughter, hath likewiſe introduced your eloquence.

This honour, paid by ſo many nations to our excellent writers, is a proof that Europe owes to us its preſervation from degeneracy. I will not ſay that every thing is haſtening towards a ſhameful decay; the common complaint of thoſe ſatiriſts, who endeavour to juſtify their own weakneſs by that which they impute to the age. I own, indeed, that the glory of our arms is ſupported with more dignity than that of our learning; but the fire which formerly enlightened us is not yet extinct. Have not theſe latter years produced the only book of

* The place where Peterſburg now ſtands was formerly a marſhy and barren deſert.

chro-

chronology, in which the manners of men, and the characters of courts and ages, are painted with a maſterly hand? a work, which, were it but drily inſtructive, like ſo many others, would nevertheleſs be the beſt of the kind; but in which the author ‡ hath found out the happy ſecret of mixing pleaſure with inſtruction; a ſecret attainable only by thoſe men who are ſuperior to their works.

The cauſes of the riſe and fall of the Roman empire have been demonſtrated in a ſhorter book ſtill, written by a bold and daring genius †, who goes to the bottom of every ſubject, while he only ſeems to ſkim on the ſurface. Never had we more elegant and faithful tranſlators than at preſent: true philoſophers have at laſt begun to write hiſtory. A man, equally remarkable for the elegance of his ſtile and the ſolidity of his judgment ‖, is formed amidſt the tumults of war. There are ſeveral of theſe amiable geniuſes whom Tibullus and Ovid would have conſidered as their diſciples, and wiſhed to have for their friends. The theatre, I confeſs, is threatened with a ſudden fall; but, at leaſt, I ſee here that truly tragic genius *,

‡ The preſident Hénaut. In ſome tranſlations of this diſcourſe, the name of the abbé Langlet has been inſerted in the note, inſtead of that of M. Hénaut: a ſtrange kind of miſtake!

† The preſident Monteſquieu.

‖ The marquis de Vauvenargues, a young man of the greateſt hopes, who died in the twenty-ſeventh year of his age.

* M. Crébillon, author of Electra and Radamiſta. Theſe plays, which are filled with ſtrokes truly tragical, are frequently acted.

whoſe

whoſe example I have endeavoured to follow, when I ventured to take a few ſteps in the ſame career. I view him with a mixture of ſorrow and ſatisfaction, as we behold, on the ruins of our native country, an hero who hath bravely fought in its defence. I obſerve ſeveral among you, who, in imitation of the great Moliere, have rendered comedy a ſchool of manners and of decency; a ſchool which deſerves as much encouragement in France as a leſs chaſte theatre enjoyed at Athens. If that celebrated author, who firſt adorned philoſophy with all the graces of poetry, belongs to a more remote age, he is ſtill the honour and the conſolation of yours.

Great talents muſt always be rare, eſpecially when the taſte and genius of a nation are formed. It is then with men of letters as it is with foreſts, where the trees, crowded together, and reared up, will not ſuffer any one to raiſe its head above the reſt. When commerce is in a few hands, ſome people make prodigious fortunes, while the greater number remain poor; but when commerce is more widely diffuſed, wealth becomes general, and great fortunes are rare. We have, gentlemen, a great deal of genius in France, and that is the very reaſon why we ſhall find for the future very few ſuperior geniuſes.

But, notwithſtanding this univerſal improvement of the nation, I will not deny that our language, elegant as it now is, and fixed as, one would imagine, it ought to be by ſo many excellent performances, may nevertheleſs be eaſily corrupted. We ought to apprize ſtrangers that it already loſes much of its purity in almoſt

all

all the books compoſed in that famous republic, which hath been ſo long our ally ‡, and in which the French is the prevailing language, notwithſtanding the factions that oppoſe France. But if it is corrupted in that country by a mixture of idioms, it is in danger of being corrupted among our ſelves by a mixture of different ſtiles. Whatever vitiates the taſte of a nation, will, in the end, vitiate its language. Some writers endeavour to enliven the moſt ſerious and inſtructive works, by familiar and colloquial expreſſions. Some introduce the burleſque ſtile of Marot into the moſt noble ſubjects; which is much the ſame abſurdity as if they were to dreſs a prince in the garb of a harlequin Some make uſe of new terms, which are entirely uſeleſs, and ſhould never be hazarded but when they are abſolutely neceſſary. There are ſeveral other faults, with which I am the more ſenſibly affected, becauſe I have fallen into ſome of them myſelf. But, to preſerve me from ſuch errors for the future, I ſhall find among you, gentlemen, thoſe aſſiſtances which my learned predeceſſor acquired by his ſtudies. Intimately acquainted with the works of Cicero, he had from thence derived this advantage, that he ſtudied to ſpeak the French language with as much purity as that conſul ſpoke the Latin. But it belongs to that gentleman, who hath made the works of that great orator his particular ſtudy, and was the friend of the preſident Bouhier, to revive among us the eloquence of the one, and to diſplay to you the merit of the other. To-day he has a double taſk to per-

‡ The United Provinces.

form:

form: he has a friend to lament and celebrate, and a friend to receive and encourage. He may tell you with more eloquence than I, but not with more ſenſibility, what charms friendſhip gives to the labours of men devoted to the ſtudy of letters; how it ſerves to conduct, correct, excite, and ſolace them; and how it inſpires the ſoul with that pleaſing and agreeable compoſure, without which we can never be maſter of our own ideas.

In this manner it was that the Academy was at firſt formed. It hath an origin ſtill more noble than that which it received from cardinal Richlieu; it took its firſt riſe in the boſom of friendſhip. Men united by this reſpectable tie, and by their common taſte for the fine arts, met together, without aſpiring to fame: they were leſs illuſtrious than their ſucceſſors, but not leſs happy. Decency, candour, concord, and ſound criticiſm, which is ſo oppoſite to ſatire, inſpired their meetings. The ſame virtues and good qualities will always animate yours: they will be the conſtant purſuit of men of letters; and will ſerve, perhaps, to reform thoſe who make themſelves unworthy of the name. The true lovers of the arts are always friends. Who hath a better right to ſay ſo than I? I would take the liberty, gentlemen, to enlarge on the inſtances of friendſhip with which moſt of you have been pleaſed to honour me, were it not that I am bound in duty to forget my own private concerns, in order to talk of the great object of all your labours, of thoſe intereſts before which all others ſhould vaniſh; I mean the glory of the nation.

I know

I know that panegyric, unleſs it is managed with the greateſt delicacy, is a very nauſeous and diſagreeable ſubject: I know that the public, ever fond of novelty, imagines that every topic of praiſe is already exhauſted on your founder and protectors. But ought I to refuſe the debt I owe, becauſe thoſe who have paid it before me have left me nothing new to ſay on the ſubject? It is with theſe panegyrics, which are ſo frequently repeated, as with public ſolemnities, which are always the ſame, and which revive the memory of events dear to a whole people: they are neceſſary. To celebrate ſuch men as cardinal Richlieu and Lewis XIV. to praiſe a Sequier, a Colbert, a Turenne, and a Condé, what is it but to cry aloud, Ye kings, ye miniſters, and ye generals, in times to come, imitate theſe great men? Is it not well known that Trajan's panegyric excited Antoninus to the ſtudy and practice of virtue? And does not Marcus Aurelius, the greateſt man and the greateſt emperor that ever lived, does not he confeſs, in his writings, the ſpirit of emulation with which the virtues of Antoninus filled him. When Henry IV. heard the appellation of "Father of his people" given to Louis XII. in parliament, he felt himſelf inſpired with an ambition of imitating him, and he actually ſurpaſſed him.

Think ye, gentlemen, that the honours paid by ſo many mouths to the memory of Lewis XIV. had not a ſtrong influence on the mind of his ſucceſſor from his earlieſt youth? It will one day be ſaid, that both of them attained to immortality, ſometimes by the ſame, and ſometimes by different roads. Both of them will be

equal

equal in this reſpect, that they never diſburdened themſelves of the load of public affairs, but out of gratitude to good miniſters; and this circumſtance, perhaps, will conſtitute their greateſt glory. Poſterity will ſay, that both of them loved juſtice, and commanded their armies. The one ſought, by the moſt noble atchievements, the glory which he ſo well deſerved: he called her to him from the height of his throne; and ſhe was his conſtant attendant in all his conqueſts, and in all his enterprizes, till at laſt ſhe filled the world with his name. He diſplayed a great ſoul, as well in adverſity as proſperity, in the field, in his palace, and in all the courts of Europe and of Aſia. The ſea and the land bore witneſs to his power; and the moſt inconſiderable objects had no ſooner acquired a connexion with him, than they preſently aſſumed a new character, and received the ſtamp of his grandeur. The other protects kings and emperors, ſubdues provinces, and interrupts the courſe of his conqueſts to go and relieve his ſubjects; to which god-like office he flies from the boſom of death, whoſe fatal ſtroke he had hardly eſcaped. He obtains victories, and performs the moſt noble exploits with ſuch an eaſe and unconcern as would make us imagine, that what ſtrikes other men with aſtoniſhment, is only to him in the ordinary and common courſe of nature. He conceals the greatneſs of his ſoul, without endeavouring to conceal it; but is not able to weaken thoſe rays of majeſty, which piercing, in ſpite of all his endeavours to the contrary, the veil of his modeſty, from thence derives a more durable luſtre.

Lewis XIV. ſignalized himſelf by the moſt glorious atchievements, by the great love he entertained for all the arts, and by the royal encouragement he ſo chearfully gave them. O you, his auguſt ſucceſſor, you have already imitated his noble example; and you wait only for that peace, which you endeavour to obtain by your victories, to accompliſh all your generous projects, which cannot be executed but in the boſom of quiet and tranquillity.

You began your victories in that very province where thoſe of your great-grandfather were begun, and you have already extended them to a greater diſtance. He lamented, that, in the courſe of his glorious campaigns, he could not oblige an enemy worthy of ſuch a noble antagoniſt, to engage with him in a pitched battle. That glory, which he ſo ardently deſired, you have enjoyed. Happier than the great Henry, who hardly gained any victories but over his own ſubjects, you have conquered the eternal and intrepid enemies of your crown. Your ſon, next to you the object of our prayers and our dread, learned at your ſide to behold danger and misfortune without being troubled, and the moſt glorious triumph without being dazzled. When we were trembling for you in Paris, you were in a field of carnage. Compoſed in thoſe moments of horror and confuſion, compoſed amidſt the tumultuous joy of your victorious troops, you embraced that general, who only wiſhed to live that he might ſee you triumph; that man, whom your virtues and his own conſpired to make your ſubject, and whom France will ever number among her deareſt and moſt illuſtrious chil-

children *. You rewarded, by your approbation and praiſes, all thoſe who had contributed to the victory; and this reward is the moſt glorious that Frenchmen can receive.

But what will for ever be preſerved in the annals of the Academy, and muſt afford the greateſt ſatisfaction to each of you, gentlemen, is, that one of your fellow-members performed the moſt important ſervice to your protector, and to France, in that glorious battle. He it was that after having run from rank to rank, and after having fought in ſo many different places, flew to give and to execute that advice which was ſo ſeaſonable, ſo ſalutary, and ſo readily embraced by the king, whoſe penetrating eye diſcerned every thing in thoſe moments when the mind is moſt apt to wander. Enjoy, gentlemen, enjoy the pleaſure of hearing in this

* The late count de Saxe.

We wiſh our author had been a little more moderate in this panegyric on the character of his ſovereign, as it ſavours much of adulation.

His candour too would have been more conſpicuous, if, in mentioning the victory which the French king obtained at Fontenoy over the eternal enemies of his nation, he had owned, that above ſixty thouſand French had with great difficulty obliged about twenty thouſand Engliſh troops to retire; and that twenty thouſand Engliſh troops, unaſſiſted by their allies, were on the verge of obtaining a complete victory over the whole French army, headed by their king and dauphin, poſted in the moſt advantageous manner, and fortified with a great number of batteries.

The virtues of his moſt Chriſtian majeſty's heart we ſhall not preſume to diſpute; but, ſurely, to celebrate him as a hero in the field, to compare him in point of courage to Henry IV. or in power and magnificence to Lewis XIV. is a ſtrain of encomium that even throws ridicule upon his character.

aſſembly the very words which your protector ſaid to the nephew * of your founder on the field of battle; "I ſhall never forget the important ſervice you have done me." But if this glory be ſo dear to you, how dear muſt be to all France, and how dear will one day be to Europe in general, thoſe pacific ſteps which Lewis XV. took after his victories! He ſtill purſues the ſame meaſures: he never attacks his enemies but in order to diſarm them: he does not deſire to conquer them, but in order to make them agree to reaſonable terms of accommodation. Did they but know the real ſentiments of his heart, they would make him their arbiter, inſtead of their enemy; and that, perhaps, would be the only method of gaining advantages over him §. The virtues which render him ſuch a formidable foe they have fully experienced, from the time of his aſſuming the command of his armies: but thoſe which ought to engage their truſt and confidence, and ought to be the bond of union among different nations, require a longer time to be diſcovered by an enemy.

We, in this reſpect more happy, we have known the goodneſs of his heart from the moment of his mounting the throne. We have thought of him, as all ages, and all nations, will ever think. Never was love more ſincere, or more emphatically expreſſed, than ours. All our hearts felt its force, and your eloquent mouths were the interpreters of our inward

* The marechal duke de Richlieu.

§ The event juſtified in 1748, what Mr. de Voltaire had ſaid in 1746.

feel-

feelings. Medals, worthy of the moſt illuſtrious times of Greece †, eternize his triumphs and our happineſs. May I behold in our public places this humane monarch, carved by the hands of our Praxiteles's, and environed with all the ſymbols of public happineſs! And may I read at the feet of his ſtatue thoſe words which are already in all our hearts, "To the Father of his country!"

† The medals ſtruck at the Louvre are ſuperior to the moſt beautiful ones of antiquity, not for the elegance or propriety of the inſcription; but for ingenuity of the deſign, and the beauty of the impreſſion.

CONTINUATION

OF THE

MISCELLANIES

IN

HISTORY, LITERATURE, &c. &c.

A LETTER ON DANTE.

YOU want to know the character of Danté; the Italians call him divine; but he is a hidden divinity: few people underſtand his oracles. He has had commentators; and that, perhaps, is another reaſon why he is ſo little underſtood. His reputation will be always increaſing, becauſe he is never read. There are about twenty beautiful ſtrokes in him, which people get by heart; and they think that ſufficient to ſpare them the labour of examining the reſt.

This divine Danté, according to the common report, was a very unhappy man. Do not imagine that he was reckoned divine in his own

own age, or that he thought himſelf a prophet. It is true, he was a prior; but not a prior of monks: he was a prior of Florence, that is, one of its ſenators.

He was born in 1260, according to the accounts of his countrymen. Bayle, who wrote at Rotterdam, *currente calamo*, for his bookſeller, about four whole centuries after Danté, fixes his birth in 1265. I eſteem Bayle neither the more nor the leſs for being miſtaken in about five years. The great thing is not to miſtake, either in point of taſte, or in point of argument.

The arts began about that time to revive in the country of Danté. Florence was, like Athens, the ſeat of wit, of grandeur, of levity, of inconſtancy, and faction. The White Faction had great credit, and was ſo called from the name of the "Signora Bianca." The oppoſite faction was intitled the Party of Blacks, the better to diſtinguiſh them from the Whites. The Florentines were not ſatisfied with theſe two parties: they had, beſides, the Guelfs and the Gibelins. Moſt of the Whites were Gibelins, of the party of the emperors; and the Blacks inclined to the Guelfs, who were attached to the popes.

All theſe factions loved liberty, and yet did all that lay in their power to deſtroy it. Boniface VIII. reſolved to avail himſelf of theſe diviſions to overturn the power of the emperors in Italy. He declared Charles of Valois, brother to the French king Philip the Handſome, his vicar in Tuſcany. The vicar came with a numerous army, expelled the Whites and the Gibelins, and drew upon himſelf the hatred and

and deteſtation of the Blacks and the Guelfs. Danté was a White and a Gibelin. He was expelled among the firſt, and his houſe levelled with the ground. Hence we may judge whether he was well diſpoſed to the family of France and the popes during the reſt of his life. It is pretended, however, that he made a journey to Paris; and that, to cure himſelf of the ſpleen, he commenced theologian, and diſputed ſtrenuouſly in the ſchools. It is added, that the emperor Henry VII. did nothing for him, Gibelin as he was; that he went to Frederic of Arragon, king of Sicily, and returned as poor as he went. He was obliged to apply to the marquis of Malaſpina, and to the great can of Verona. The marquis and the great can did not indemnify him, and he died poor at Ravenna in the fifty-ſixth year of his age. It was in theſe different places that he compoſed his comedy of Hell, of Purgatory, and of Paradiſe; and this hotch-potch has been reckoned a beautiful epic poem.

The firſt objects he ſaw at the entry of Hell were a he-lion and a ſhe-wolf. In an inſtant Virgil appears to encourage him: Virgil tells him, that he was born a Lombard; which is exactly the ſame as if Homer had ſaid that he was born a Turk. Virgil offers to perform to Danté the honours of Hell and of Purgatory, and to lead him to the gate of St. Peter; but acknowledges that he could not enter with him.

Mean while, Charon tranſports them both in his boat. Virgil tells him, that ſoon after his arrival in Hell he ſaw a powerful Being, that came thither in queſt of the ſouls of Abel, Noah,

Noah, Abraham, Moſes, and David. As they advanced farther into the infernal regions, they diſcovered ſome very agreeable retreats. In one of theſe were Homer, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan; in another Electra, Hector, Ænæas, Lucretia, Brutus, and Saladin the Turk; and in a third Socrates, Plato, Hippocrates, and the Arabian Averroës.

At laſt appeared the real Hell, where Pluto judges the damned. In the crowd the traveller obſerved ſome cardinals, ſome popes, and a great number of Florentines. Is this in the comic ſtile? no. Is it in the heroic ſtile? no. In what ſtile is it then? in the ſtile of wildneſs and extravagance.

And yet his work contains ſome verſes ſo happy and natural, that they have preſerved their beauty for four hundred years, and will preſerve it for ever. Beſides, a poem that ſends the popes to Hell, arouſes the attention; and the commentators have exhauſted all their ſagacity and penetration in determining exactly who are the perſons whom Danté has damned, and have been at great pains not to deceive themſelves in a matter of ſuch importance.

The Italians have founded a chair, and eſtabliſhed a lecture, to explain this claſſic author. You will aſk me, why the inquiſition does not expoſe ſuch a meaſure? My anſwer is, the members of the inquiſition in Italy underſtand raillery: they know that a few witty verſes can never do any harm. Of this, and of the merit of the work, you may form ſome judgment by the following tranſlation (which is a very free one) of part of the twenty-third canto. It relates to one of the damned, with whom the

author was acquainted. The ſpirit ſpeaks thus:

The count de Guido was I call'd on earth,
A mighty ſoldier, and as great poltroon;
Then with St. Francis I enroll'd my name,
That, holding by his diſcipline, I might
One day obtain a happy place in Heav'n.
There ſhould I be, had not a knaviſh pope
Commanded all my ſervice, and then left
My wretched ſoul to Beelzebub a prey.
The truth to tell, while I ſurviv'd on earth,
Around Rimini war I long maintain'd,
Leſs like a hero than a cheat, I own;
And, as a ſharper, ſome renown acquir'd.
But when my locks aſſum'd a grizzl'd hue,
The time when wiſdom counſels to retire,
Remorſe began to gnaw my hoary age,
And to confeſſion ſtrait I had recourſe.
Repentance late arriv'd, and ſwiftly fled!
The holy father at that period warr'd,
Not with the Sultan, nor the ruthleſs Turk,
But Chriſtians, whom, like a true Turk, he pillag'd.
Now, diſregarding tonſure or tiara,
Or ev'n St. Francis' girdle or his frock,
"Brother, (ſaid he) it ſuits my preſent ſcheme
To have Preneſte forthwith in my pow'r:
Adviſe me—ſearch beneath that reverend cowl,
Some happy ſtratagem, ſome ſhrewd device,
To add to the dominions I poſſeſs,
The tempting bait to which I have no claim.
The double keys of Heav'n are in my power:
Theſe, the weak piety of Celeſtine
Converted to no uſe; but I can ope
And ſhut at pleaſure Heav'n's eternal gates:

If

If thou wilt ſerve me, Heav'n ſhall be thy boon."
Too well I ſerv'd him, curſed be my zeal!
Preneſte fell to him: my lot was death.
Then good St. Francis haſten'd to my aid,
Intending to convey my ſoul to Heav'n;
But Satan riding poſt, "Hip, Saint—(cry'd he)
Stop—not ſo faſt; for, by your leave, I claim
This counſellor of holy church—he's mine;
And right it is that I ſhould have my own."
Then the good ſaint, confounded and abaſh'd,
Reſign'd me to the devil without diſpute.
"Ah! good ſir Lucifer, I kneeling cry'd,
A ſaint am I; behold my robe of grey:
The holy pope abſolv'd me ere I dy'd!"
"Certes, reply'd the devil with a ſneer,
A great reſpect I have for abſolution:
It ſcours the ſoul from ſins and follies paſt,
Provided ſtill you run no ſcore afreſh:
This nice diſtinction I have often made
To ſuch as thee; and, thanks to modern Rome,
The devil's an adept in theology."
He ſaid, and grinn'd: no anſwer I return'd
To Beelzebub, he argu'd with ſuch force.
Then ſeizing me, with rude and rig'rous arm,
He on my rueful carcaſe ſtrait beſtow'd
Twenty good ſtripes, that made me ſmart full ſore,
Which Heav'n repay to Boniface the eighth *.

* Boniface VIII. was a mortal enemy to the Gibelins; and, beſides, a monſter of pride, cruelty, and ambition.

OF THE
CHIMERA
OF THE
SOVEREIGN GOOD.

HAppineſs is an abſtract idea, compoſed of ſeveral pleaſing ſenſations. Plato, who wrote better than he reaſoned, formed the fanciful notion of his architypal world, that is, his original world, his general ideas of beauty, of virtue, of order, and of juſtice, as if there were eternal beings called Order, Virtue, Beauty, and Juſtice, from which were derived thoſe faint copies of what we mortals call juſt, beautiful, and good.

It is in imitation of his example, that the philoſophers have employed ſo much time and labour in ſearching for the ſovereign good, as the chemiſts have done in ſearching for the philoſopher's ſtone; but there is no ſuch thing as the ſovereign good, any more than there is the ſovereign ſquare, or the ſovereign crimſon. There are crimſon colours, and there are ſquares; but there is no general being that is ſo called. This ridiculous manner of reaſoning hath long infected philoſophy.

Animals feel a pleaſure in performing all their natural functions. In this view the ſupreme happineſs would be an uninterrupted courſe of pleaſures; but ſuch a courſe is incompatible with our organs and our condition. There is a great pleaſure in eating and drinking, and a greater

ſtill

ſtill in the union of the two ſexes; but were man to be always engaged in eating, or always entranced in the raptures of enjoyment, his organs would not be ſufficient for ſuch violent exerciſes; he could not perform the duties of ſocial life; and thus the human kind would be deſtroyed by an exceſs of pleaſure.

To paſs continually, and without interruption, from one pleaſure to another, is a notion no leſs chimerical. The woman that has conceived muſt be brought to-bed, which cannot be done without pain; and the man muſt cleave wood and hew ſtone, which is far from being a pleaſure.

If we give the name of happineſs to the few pleaſures that are ſcattered through life, there is ſuch a thing as happineſs in reality. If we give it only to a permanent pleaſure, or to a continued and diverſified courſe of pleaſing ſenſations, happineſs was not made for the terraqueous globe; we muſt ſeek for it ſomewhere elſe.

If we give the name of happineſs to the external advantages which a man enjoys, whether it be wealth, power, or reputation, we are no leſs deceived. Some colliers are more happy than ſome ſovereigns. Aſk Cromwell whether he enjoyed more pleaſure when he was protector, than when he went to the tavern in his youth; he will probably tell you, that the time of his uſurpation was far from being the happieſt part of his life. How many homely dowdies are there that are better ſatisfied with their lot than Helen or Cleopatra!

There is one obſervation to be made here: it is this; when we ſay it is probable that one man is happier than another; that a young muleteer, for inſtance, has great advantages over Charles V. or that a millener is better ſatisfied with

with her condition than a princeſs, we ought to confine ourſelves to this probability. It is very likely that a muleteer, in good health, enjoys more pleaſure than Charles V. tormented with the gout; but it is likewiſe very poſſible that Charles V. with his crutches, may reflect with ſo much pleaſure on his having held a king of France and a pope priſoners, that his lot may, in every reſpect, be preferable to that of the young and vigorous muleteer.

It belongs ſurely to God alone, to that being who beholds all hearts, to determine who is the happieſt man. There is only one caſe in which a man may ſafely affirm that his condition is better or worſe than that of his neighbour; and this caſe is the time of rivalſhip, and the moment of victory.

Let us ſuppoſe Archimedes to have made an appointment with his miſtreſs in the evening, and Nomentanus to have made an appointment with the ſame woman, and at the ſame hour. Archimedes comes to the gate: the ſervants ſhut it in his teeth, and open it to his rival, who makes an excellent ſupper; during which he laughs at Archimedes, and then enjoys his miſtreſs, while the other remains in the ſtreet expoſed to the cold, the rain, and hail. Nomentanus, it is evident, has a right to ſay, "I am happier to-night than Archimedes; I enjoy more pleaſure than him." But this will only hold on the ſuppoſition that Archimedes's mind is entirely engroſſed with the vexation of having loſt a good ſupper; of being deſpiſed and deceived by a beautiful woman, ſupplanted by his rival, and expoſed to the rain, the hail, and cold. For if the philoſopher in the ſtreets ſhould happen to think that neither a whore nor a ſhower ſhould diſturb the

the tranquillity of his mind; if he is wholly engaged in the contemplation of a beautiful problem, and diſcovers the proportion between the cylinder and the ſphere; he may enjoy a pleaſure an hundred times more exquiſite than that of Nomentanus.

Hence it appears that the enjoyment of real pleaſure, or the ſuffering of real pain, are the only caſes in which we can compare the condition of one man with that of another, abſtracting from every other conſideration. Certain it is, the man who enjoys his miſtreſs is more happy at that inſtant than his deſpiſed and diſconſolate rival. A man that is in perfect health, and is eating a good partridge, taſtes more pleaſure to be ſure, than one tormented with a cholic. All this is indiſputably true; but farther we cannot go with any degree of ſafety: we cannot compare the being of one man with that of another: we have no balance to weigh the deſires and ſenſations of different men.

We began this article with Plato and his ſovereign good: we ſhall end it with Solon, and that famous ſaying of his, which hath been ſo much admired, viz. "That no man ought to be called happy before his death." This axiom is at bottom but a childiſh conceit, like many other apothegms, which time hath rendered ſacred. The moment of death hath no connexion with the manner of life which a man has led. One may die a violent and an infamous death, and yet to that inſtant have taſted all the pleaſures which human nature is capable of enjoying. It is very poſſible, and very common for a man that has long been happy, to become unhappy: Who doubts it? but it is nevertheleſs

vertheleſs certain, that he once had his happy moments.

What then is the meaning of this famous ſaying of Solon? It is no more than that a man who enjoys pleaſure to day, is not ſure of enjoying it to-morrow; a truth ſo plain and inſignificant, that it is not worth the repeating.

Of the PEOPLING of AMERICA.

THE diſcovery of America, that object of ſo much avarice and ambition, hath likewiſe become the object of philoſophy. A prodigious number of writers have endeavoured to prove that the Americans are a colony of the ancient world. Some modeſt metaphyſicians have alledged, that the ſame power which made the graſs to grow on the plains of America, might likewiſe ſtock the country with inhabitants; but this naked and ſimple ſyſtem has not been regarded.

When firſt the great Columbus gave it as his opinion, that there might poſſibly be ſuch a new world, it was boldly aſſerted that it was abſolutely impoſſible; and Columbus was taken for a viſionary. When he had actually made the diſcovery, it was pretended that this new world was known long before.

Some have alledged that one Martin Beheim, a native of Nuremberg, ſet ſail from the coaſts of Flanders about the year 1460, to go in queſt of this unknown world; and that he reached the ſtreights

ſtreigths of Magellan, of which he left draughts. But as Martin Beheim did not people America, and as it was abſolutely neceſſary that one of Noah's great grandſons ſhould take this trouble, they have ranſacked the records of antiquity to ſee if they could find any thing that had the leaſt reſemblance to a long voyage, and which they could apply to the diſcovery of this fourth part of the globe. Accordingly they have ſent the ſhips of Solomon to Mexico, and have made them bring from thence the gold of Ophir, though he was obliged to borrow it from king Hiram. They have even found America in Plato *. They have given the honour of its diſcovery to the Carthaginians; and have quoted on this ſubject a book of Ariſtotle's, which he never wrote.

* He might have added Plutarch in his life of Sertorius and Diodorus Siculus, which laſt ſays, that the Phœnicians extended their diſcoveries along the coaſt of Africa, till at length one of their ſhips being driven a great way into the Atlantic ocean, by a ſtorm that laſted many days, arrived at an iſland unparalleled for its beauty and fertility. The Indians of North America have a conſtant tradition that their forefathers came from the extremities of Aſia; and that America and Aſia were joined together by a narrow iſthmus, which the ſea has broke through. An Indian of Louiſiana, who travelled by land in a weſtward direction as far as the South-ſea, told Du Pratz, that one of the natives of the country bordering on that ſea, declared, that when he was young he ſaw a very old man, who remembered to have ſeen the iſthmus of communication between America and Aſia; and that at low water the rocks were ſtill viſible. A detachment of French Canadians found, in a moraſs near the river Ohio, the ſkeletons of four elephants; a ſpecies of animals not natural to America: beſides, there is a ſtrong reſemblance between the North Americans and Tartars, in figure, language, cuſtoms, and religion.

Hornius

Hornius pretends to find ſome analogy between the language of the Hebrews and that of the Caribbees. Father Laffiteau, the Jeſuit, has not failed to improve ſuch a curious hint. The Mexicans in the violence of their grief tear their garments: ſome Aſiaticks do the ſame; therefore they are the anceſtors of the Mexicans. We may add, with as much reaſon, the people of Languedoc are fond of dancing; the Hurons likewiſe dance on their days of rejoicing; and therefore the Languedocians are ſprung from the Hurons, or the Hurons from the Languedocians.

The authors of a terrible Univerſal Hiſtory pretend, that all the Americans are a colony of the Tartars. They aſſure us, that this is the opinion moſt generally received among the learned; but do not inform us whether it be among the learned that think for themſelves. According to them, ſome deſcendant of Noah had nothing more at heart than to go and fix his quarters in the delicious country of Kamtſchatka, to the north of Siberia. His children, having nothing to do, went to viſit Canada, either by equipping a fleet for the purpoſe, or by walking on the ice by way of recreation, along ſome neck of land, which from that time to the preſent has never been again diſcovered. They then began to beget children in Canada, and in a very ſhort time that beautiful country, being no longer able to maintain the prodigious number of inhabitants, they went to people Mexico, Peru, and Chili; and their great grand-daughters were brought to-bed of giants near the ſtreights of Magellan.

As lions are to be found in ſome of the hotter climates of America, theſe authors ſuppoſe that the

the Chriſtopher Columbus's of Kamtſchatka carried over ſome lions to Canada for their diverſion.

But the Kamtſchatkatians were not the only people that furniſhed the new world with inhabitants; they were charitably aſſiſted by the tartars of Mantchou; by the Huns, the Chineſe, and the Japoneſe.

The Tartars of Mantchou are inconteſtibly the anceſtors of the Peruvians; for Mango Capak was the firſt inca of Peru. Mango reſembles Manco, Manco Mancu, Mancu Mantchu, and from hence, by a ſmall addition, we have Mantchou. Nothing can be better demonſtrated.

As to the Huns, they built in Hungary a town that was called Cunadi. Now, by changing cu into ca, we have Canadi, from which Canada evidently derives its name.

A plant reſembling the ginſeng of the Chineſe grows in Canada, therefore the Chineſe carried it thither, even before they were maſters of that part of Chineſe Tartary where their ginſeng is produced; and beſides, the Chineſe are ſuch great ſailors, that they formerly ſent fleets to America, without preſerving the leaſt correſpondence with their colonies.

With regard to the Japoneſe, as they lie neareſt to America, from which they are diſtant only about twelve hundred leagues, they muſt certainly have been there in former times; but they afterwards neglected that voyage.

Such are the learned tracts that are boldly uſhered into the world in the preſent age. What anſwer can we give to theſe ſyſtems, and to ſo many others of the like nature? None.

The

The Hiſtory of the TRAVELS of SCARMENTADO*.

Written by himſelf.

I Was born in Candia in the year 1600. My father was governor of the city; and I remember that a poet of middling parts, and of a moſt unmuſical ear, whoſe name was Iro, compoſed ſome verſes in my praiſe, in which he made me to deſcend from Minos in a direct line; but my father being afterwards diſgraced, he wrote ſome other verſes, in which he derived my pedigree from no nobler an origin than the amours of Paſiphæ and her gallant. This Iro was a moſt miſchievous rogue, and one of the moſt troubleſome fellows in the iſland.

My father ſent me at fifteen years of age to proſecute my ſtudies at Rome. There I arrived in full hopes of learning all kinds of truth; for I had hitherto been taught quite the reverſe, according to the cuſtom of this lower world from China to the Alps. Monſignor Profondo, to whom I was recommended, was a man of a very ſingular character, and one of the moſt terrible ſcholars in the world. He was for teaching me the categories of Ariſtotle; and was juſt on the point of placing me in the category of his minions; a fate which I narrowly eſcaped. I ſaw proceſſions, exorciſms, and ſome robberies. It was commonly ſaid, but without any foundation,

* The reader will at once perceive that this is a ſpirited ſatire on mankind in general, and particularly on perſecution for conſcience ſake.

that

that *la Signora Olimpia*, a lady of great prudence, ſold ſeveral things that ought not to be ſold. I was then of an age to reliſh all theſe comical adventures. A young lady of great ſweetneſs of temper, called *la Signora Fatelo*, thought proper to fall in love with me: ſhe was courted by the reverend father *Poignardini*, and by the reverend father *Aconiti* *, young monks of an order which is now extinct; and ſhe reconciled the two rivals, by granting her favours to me; but at the ſame time I ran the riſk of being excommunicated and poiſoned. I left Rome highly pleaſed with the architecture of St. Peter.

I travelled to France: it was during the reign of Lewis the Juſt. The firſt queſtion put to me was, whether I chuſed to breakfaſt on a ſlice of the mareſchal D'Ancre †, whoſe fleſh the people had roaſted, and diſtributed with great liberality to ſuch as chuſed to taſte it.

This kingdom was continually involved in civil wars, ſometimes for a place at court, ſometimes for two pages of theological controverſy. This fire, which one while lay concealed under the aſhes, and at another burſt forth with great violence, had deſolated theſe beautiful provinces for upwards of ſixty years. The pretext was,

* Alluding to the infamous practice of poiſoning and aſſaſſination, at that time prevalent in Rome.

† This was the famous Concini, who was murdered on the draw-bridge of the Louvre, by the intrigues of De Luines, not without the knowledge of the king, Lewis XIII. His body, which had been ſecretly interred in the church of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois, was next day dug up by the populace, who dragged it through the ſtreets, then burned the fleſh, and threw the bones into the river. The mareſchal's greateſt crime was his being a foreigner.

the

the defending the liberties of the Gallican church. "Alas! ſaid I, theſe people are nevertheleſs born with a gentle diſpoſition: what can have drawn them ſo far from their natural character? They joke and keep holy days *. Happy the time when they ſhall do nothing but joke!"

I went over to England, where the ſame diſputes occaſioned the ſame barbarities. Some pious Catholics had reſolved, for the good of the church, to blow up into the air with gun-powder the king, the royal family, and the whole parliament, and thus to deliver England from all theſe heretics at once. They ſhewed me the place where queen Mary of bleſſed memory, the daughter of Henry VIII. had cauſed more than five hundred of her ſubjects to be burnt. An Iriſh prieſt aſſured me, that it was a very good action; firſt, becauſe thoſe who were burnt were Engliſhmen; and ſecondly, becauſe they did not make uſe of holy water, nor believe in St. Patrick's Hole. He was greatly ſurprized that queen Mary was not yet canonized; but he hoped ſhe would receive that honour as ſoon as the cardinal nephew ſhould be a little more at leiſure.

From thence I went to Holland, where I hoped to find more tranquility among a people of a more cold and phlegmatic conſtitution. Juſt as I arrived at the Hague, the people were cutting off the head of a venerable old man. It was the bald head of the prime miniſter Barnevelt; a man who deſerved better treatment from the republic. Touched with pity at this affecting ſcene, I aſked what was his crime, and whether

* Referring to the maſſacre of the Proteſtants, perpetrated on the eve of St. Bartholomew.

he

he had betrayed the ſtate. "He has done much worſe, replied a preacher in a black cloak; he believed that men may be ſaved by good works as well as by faith. You muſt be ſenſible, adds he, that if ſuch opinions were to gain ground, a republic could not ſubſiſt; and that there muſt be ſevere laws to ſuppreſs ſuch ſcandalous and horrid blaſphemies." A profound politician ſaid to me with a ſigh, "Alas! ſir, this happy time will not laſt long; it is only by chance that the people are ſo zealous: they are naturally inclined to the abominable doctrine of toleration, and they will certainly at laſt grant it." This reflexion ſet him a groaning. For my own part, in expectation of that fatal period when moderation and indulgence ſhould take place, I inſtantly quitted a country where ſeverity was not ſoftened by any lenitive, and embarked for Spain.

The court was then at Seville: the galleons were juſt arrived; and every thing breathed plenty and gladneſs, in the moſt beautiful ſeaſon of the year. I obſerved at the end of an alley of orange and citron trees, a kind of large ring, ſurrounded with ſteps covered with rich and coſtly cloth. The king, the queen, the infants, and the infantas, were ſeated under a ſuperb canopy. Oppoſite to the royal family was another throne, raiſed higher than that on which his majeſty ſat. I ſaid to one of my fellow travellers, "Unleſs this throne be reſerved for God, I don't ſee what purpoſe it can ſerve." This unguarded expreſſion was overheard by a grave Spaniard, and coſt me dear. Mean while, I imagined we were going to a carouſal, or a match of bull-baiting, when the grand inquiſitor appeared in

that elevated throne, from whence he bleſſed the king and the people.

Then came an army of monks, who filed off in pairs, white, black, grey, ſhod, unſhod, bearded, beardleſs, with pointed cowls, and without cowls: next followed the hangman; and laſt of all were ſeen, in the midſt of the guards and grandees, about forty perſons clad in ſackcloth, on which were painted the figures of flames and devils. Some of theſe were Jews, who could not be prevailed upon to renounce Moſes entirely: others were Chriſtians, who had married women with whom they had ſtood ſponſors to a child; who had not adored our Lady of Atocha; or who had refuſed to part with their ready money in favour of the Hieronymite brothers. Some pretty prayers were ſung with much devotion, and then the criminals were burnt at a ſlow fire; a ceremony with which the royal family ſeemed to be greatly edified.

As I was going to bed in the evening, two members of the inquiſition came to my lodging with a figure of St. Hermandad. They embraced me with great tenderneſs, and conducted me in ſolemn ſilence to a well-aired priſon, furniſhed with a bed of mat, and a beautiful crucifix. There I remained for ſix weeks; at the end of which the reverend father, the Inquiſitor, ſent for me. He preſſed me in his arms for ſome time with the moſt paternal affection; and told me that he was ſorry to hear that I had been ſo ill lodged; but that all the apartments of the houſe were full, and hoped I ſhould be better accommodated the next time. He then aſked me with great cordiality if I knew for what reaſon I was impriſoned; I told the reverend father

ther that it was evidently for my ſins. "'Very well, ſays he, my dear child; but for what particular ſin? Speak freely." I racked my brain with conjectures, but could not poſſibly gueſs. He then charitably diſmiſſed me.

At laſt I remembered my unguarded expreſſion. I eſcaped with a little bodily correction, and a fine of thirty thouſand reals. I was led to make my obeiſance to the grand inquiſitor, who was a man of great politeneſs. He aſked me how I liked his little feaſt: I told him it was a moſt delicious one; and then went to preſs my companions to quit the country, beautiful as it was. They had found time to inform themſelves of all the great things which the Spaniards had done for the intereſt of religion. They had read the memoirs of the famous biſhop of Chiapa, by which it appears that they had maſſacred, or burnt, or drowned, about ten millions of Infidels in America, in order to convert them. I believe the accounts of the biſhop are a little exaggerated; but ſuppoſe we reduce the number of victims to five millions, it will ſtill be a moſt glorious achievement.

The itch of travelling ſtill poſſeſſed me. I had propoſed to finiſh the tour of Europe with Turky; and thither we now directed our courſe. I put on a firm reſolution not to give my opinion of the public feaſts I might ſee for the future. "Theſe Turks, ſaid I to my companions, are a ſet of miſcreants that have not been baptized, and of conſequence will be more cruel than the reverend fathers the inquiſitors. Let us obſerve a profound ſilence while we are among the Mahometans."

Accordingly we arrived among them. I was greatly ſurpriſed to ſee more Chriſtian churches in Turky than in Candia. I even ſaw ſome numerous troops of monks, who were allowed to pray to the virgin Mary with great freedom, and to curſe Mahomet; ſome in Greek, ſome in Latin, and others in Armenian. "What good-natured people are theſe Turks," cried I. The Greek Chriſtians, and the Latin Chriſtians in Conſtantinople were mortal enemies. Theſe ſlaves perſecuted each other in much the ſame manner as dogs fight in the ſtreets, till their maſters part them with a cudgel. The grand vizier was at that time the protector of the Greeks. The Greek patriarch accuſed me of having ſupped with the Latin patriarch; and I was condemned in full divan to receive an hundred blows on the ſoles of my feet, redeemable for five hundred ſequins. Next day the grand vizier was ſtrangled. The day following his ſucceſſor, who was for the Latin party, and who was not ſtrangled till a month after, condemned me to ſuffer the ſame puniſhment, for having ſupped with the Greek patriarch. Thus was I reduced to the ſad neceſſity of abſenting myſelf entirely from the Greek and Latin churches. In order to conſole myſelf for this loſs, I took into keeping a very handſome Circaſſian. She was the moſt obliging lady I ever knew in a private converſation, and the moſt devout at the moſque. One night as ſhe was embracing me in the ſweet tranſports of love, ſhe cried, "Alla, Illa, Alla;" theſe are the ſacramental words of the Turks. I imagined they were the expreſſions of love, and therefore cried in my turn, and with a very tender accent, "Alla, Illa, Alla." "Ah! ſaid ſhe, God be

be praiſed, thou art then a Turk. I told her that I was bleſſing God for having given me ſo much ſtrength, and that I thought myſelf extremely happy. In the morning the iman came to circumciſe me; and, as I made ſome difficulty to ſubmit to the operation, the cadi of that diſtrict, a man of great loyalty, propoſed to have me empaled. I ſaved my prepuce and my poſteriors by paying a thouſand ſequins, and then fled directly into Perſia, reſolved for the future never to hear Greek or Latin maſs, nor to cry "Alla, Illa, Alla," in a love rencounter.

On my arrival at Iſpahan, the people aſked me whether I was for white or black mutton? I told them it was a matter of indifference to me, provided it was tender. It muſt be obſerved that the Perſian empire was at that time ſplit into two factions, that of the white mutton and that of the black. The two parties imagined that I made a jeſt of them both; ſo that I found myſelf engaged in a very troubleſome affair at the gates of the city, and it coſt me a great number of ſequins to get rid of the white and the black mutton.

I proceeded as far as China, in company with an interpreter, who aſſured me that this country was the ſeat of gaiety and freedom. The Tartars had made themſelves maſters of it, after having deſtroyed every thing with fire and ſword. The reverend fathers the Jeſuits on the one hand, and the reverend fathers the Dominicans on the other, alledged that they had gained many ſouls to God in that country, without any one knowing aught of the matter. Never were ſeen ſuch zealous converters: they alternately perſecuted one another: they tranſmitted to Rome whole

volumes of ſlander; and treated each other as infidels and prevaricators for the ſake of one ſoul. But the moſt violent diſpute between them was with regard to the manner of making a bow. The Jeſuits would have the Chineſe to ſalute their parents, after the faſhion of China; and the Dominicans would have them to do it after the faſhion of Rome. I happened unluckily to be taken by the Jeſuits for a Dominican. They repreſented me to his Tartarian majeſty as a ſpy of the pope. The ſupreme council charged a prime mandarin, who ordered a ſerjeant, who commanded four ſbires of the country, to ſeize me and bind me with great ceremony. In this manner I was conducted before his majeſty, after having made about an hundred and forty genuflexions. He aſked me if I was a ſpy of the pope's, and if it was true that that prince was to come in perſon to dethrone him. I told him that the pope was a prieſt of ſeventy years of age; that he lived at the diſtance of four thouſand leagues from his ſacred Tartaro-chineſe majeſty; that he had about two thouſand ſoldiers, who mounted guard with umbrellas; that he never dethroned any body; and that his majeſty might ſleep in perfect ſecurity. Of all the adventures of my life this was the leaſt fatal. I was ſent to Macao, and there I took ſhipping for Europe.

My ſhip required to be refitted on the coaſt of Golconda. I embraced this opportunity to viſit the court of the great Aureng-Zeb, of whom ſuch wonderful things have been told, and which was then in Deli. I had the pleaſure to ſee him on the day of that pompous ceremony in which he receives the celeſtial preſent ſent him by the Sherif of Mecca: this was the beſom with

with which they had ſweeped the holy houſe, the Caaba, and the Beth Alla. It is a ſymbol that ſweeps away all the pollutions of the ſoul. Aureng-Zeb ſeemed to have no need of it: he was the moſt pious man in all Indoſtan. It is true, he had cut the throat of one of his brothers, and poiſoned his father. Twenty Rayas, and as many Omras, had been put to death; but that was a trifle; nothing was talked off but his devotion. No king was thought comparable to him, except his ſacred Majeſty Muley Iſmael, the moſt ſerene emperor of Morocco, who cut off ſome heads every Friday after prayers.

I ſpoke not a word. My travels had taught me wiſdom. I was ſenſible that it did not belong to me to decide between theſe auguſt ſovereigns. A young Frenchman, indeed, a fellow-lodger of mine, was wanting in reſpect to the emperor of the Indies, and to that of Morocco. He happened to ſay very imprudently, that there were ſovereigns in Europe, who governed their dominions with great equity, and even went to church without killing their fathers or brothers, or cutting off the heads of their ſubjects. This impious diſcourſe of my young friend our interpreter tranſmitted to Indou. Inſtructed by former experience, I inſtantly cauſed my camels to be ſaddled, and ſet out with my Frenchman. I was afterwards informed that that very night the officers of the great Aureng-Zeb, having come to ſeize me, found only the interpreter, who was executed in public; and all the courtiers declared without flattery that his puniſhment was extremely juſt.

I had now only Africa to viſit, in order to enjoy all the pleaſures of our continent; and thither

I went in reality. The ſhip in which I embarked was taken by the Negro-Corſairs. The maſter of the veſſel complained loudly, and aſked why they thus violated the laws of nations. The captain of the negroes replied; "You have a long noſe and we have a ſhort one: your hair is ſtrait and ours is curled: your ſkin is aſh-coloured and ours is of the colour of ebon; and therefore we ought, by the ſacred laws of nature, to be always at enmity. You buy us in the public markets on the coaſt of Guiney like beaſts of burden, to make us labour in I don't know what kind of drudgery, equally hard and ridiculous. With the whip held over our heads, you make us dig in mountains for a kind of yellow earth, which in itſelf is good for nothing, and is not ſo valuable as an Egyptian onion. In like manner wherever we meet you, and are ſuperior to you in ſtrength, we make you ſlaves, and oblige you to manure our fields, or in caſe of refuſal cut off your noſe and ears."

To ſuch a learned diſcourſe it was impoſſible to make any anſwer. I went to labour in the ground of an old female Negro, in order to ſave my noſe and ears. After continuing in ſlavery for a whole year, I was at laſt ranſomed. I had now ſeen all that was rare, good, or beautiful on earth. I reſolved for the future to ſee nothing but my own home. I took a wife, and was cuckolded; and found that of all conditions of life this was the happieſt.

OF

OF THE

ALCORAN,

AND OF

MAHOMET.

MAHOMET, the ſon of Abdalla, was a bold and daring impoſtor. He ſays in his tenth chapter, "Who but God could have compoſed the Alcoran? Thou ſayeſt that that book was forged by Mahomet. Well, try if thou canſt write a chapter in the ſame ſtile, and call to thy aſſiſtance whomſoever thou pleaſeſt." In the ſeventeenth chapter, he breaks out in the following exclamation: "Praiſe be to him, who in the night tranſported his ſervant from the ſacred temple of Mecca to that of Jeruſalem!" A very pretty journey to be ſure; but nothing in compariſon of that other journey which he took the ſame night from planet to planet, nor attended with any of the fiery lights he ſaw in this laſt excurſion.

He pretends that it is a journey of five hundred years from one planet to another; and that in his rapid flight he ſplit the moon in two. His diſ-

ciples, who, after his death, carefully collected the verſes of his Koran, expunged his journey to heaven. They were afraid of the wits, and philoſophers. But they needed not to have been ſo ſcrupulous. They might have truſted to the commentators, who could eaſily have explained this journey. Mahomet's friends muſt certainly have known from experience, that the marvellous with the vulgar ever takes place of reaſon. The learned object in ſecret, and the people ſoon make them hold their tongue. In expunging however this journey to the planets, they have left a few words relating to his adventure on the Moon; but it is impoſſible to guard againſt every objection.

The Koran is a rhapſody without art, order, or connection. It is pretended, however, that this dull and tedious book is a very fine compoſition: for this I appeal to the Arabians, who affirm, that it is writtenwith an elegance and purity, which no ſucceeding author hath been able to attain. It is a poem, or a kind of rhythmical proſe, containing ſix thouſand verſes. Never was there a poet whoſe work and perſon made ſuch a figure in the world. It is a queſtion among the Muſſulmans, whether the Alcoran exiſted from eternity, or was created by God, and delivered to Mahomet. The doctors have determined in favour of its eternity; and very wiſely too, as this ſame eternity is a much prettier opinion than the other. In dealings with the vulgar, we muſt always embrace that opinion which is moſt incredible.

The monks, who have attacked Mahomet with great virulence, and have ſaid ſo many ſtupid things on the ſubject, alledge that he could not write.

write. But is it to be imagined that a man, who was a merchant, a poet, a legiſlator, and a ſovereign, could not ſign his name? If his book is ill ſuited to our manners, and to our times, it was nevertheleſs, very well adapted to the manners of his cotemporaries; if it is a bad book in our opinion, in theirs it was a good one; and his religion was ſtill better. It muſt be owned, that he reclaimed almoſt all Aſia from idolatry. He taught the unity of God; and declaimed with great vehemence againſt ſuch as gave him aſſociates. With him the receiving of uſury from ſtrangers is ſtrictly prohibited, and the giving of alms is warmly enjoined. Prayer is of abſolute neceſſity; and reſignation to the eternal decrees is the grand principle that actuates the whole of his theological ſyſtem. A religion ſo ſimple, ſo ſenſible, and taught by a man who was always victorious, could hardly fail of ſubduing a part of the earth. In effect, the Muſſulmans have made as many proſelytes by perſuaſion as by force. They have converted the Indians and the Negroes; and even the Turks, their conquerors, have embraced the religion of the conquered.

Mahomet left in his law a variety of cuſtoms, which he found eſtabliſhed among the Arabians; ſuch as circumciſion, faſting, travelling to Mecca, which was in uſe four thouſand years before his time, together with thoſe ablutions which are ſo neceſſary for the preſervation of health, and cleanlineſs, in a hot country where the uſe of linen was not known; and, in fine, the notion of a laſt judgment, which the Magi had always taught, and which had even reached the Arabians. It is ſaid, that as he was one day

declaring that people ſhould be raiſed from the dead entirely naked, his wife Aiſhca objected to ſuch a circumſtance as dangerous and immodeſt; "Go to, my dear," ſays he, "nobody will then be inclined to laugh." An angel, according to the Koran, is to weigh the men and women in a large pair of ſcales. This notion is alſo taken from the Magi. From them he likewiſe ſtole their narrow bridge, over which they were to paſs after death, and their Jannat, where the elect Muſſulmans ſhall find baths, well furniſhed apartments, good beds, and Houres with large black eyes. He owns it is true, that all theſe ſenſual pleaſures, ſo neceſſary for thoſe who are to be raiſed with ſenſes, will be greatly inferior to the joy reſulting from the contemplation of the ſupreme Being. He has the humility to acknowledge in his Koran, that even he himſelf ſhall not enter Paradiſe by his own merit, but by the mere good pleaſure of God. It is likewiſe by the ſame good pleaſure of the Deity, that he ordains that the fifth part of the ſpoil ſhould always belong to the prophet.

It is not true, that he excludes the women from Paradiſe; nor is likely that a man of his ſagacity and penetration would chuſe to embroil himſelf with that half of the human ſpecies which leads the other. Abulfeda ſays, that a troubleſome old woman, having one day aſked him what ſhe ſhould do to get to Paradiſe, the prophet made her this reply, "My friend, Paradiſe is not for old women." The good woman began to weep, and the prophet ſaid to her by way of conſolation, "there will be no old women then, becauſe they will all be made young again."

again." This comfortable doctrine is confirmed in the fifty-fourth chapter of the Koran.

He forbad the uſe of wine, becauſe one day ſome of his followers came drunk to prayers. He permitted the plurality of wives, conforming himſelf in this reſpect to an immemorial cuſtom among the orientals.

In a word, his civil laws are good, and his doctrines are admirable, as far as they coincide with ours; but the means he employed to propagate them were ſhocking: theſe were fraud and murder.

Some people excuſe him on the ſcore of impoſture, becauſe, ſay they, the Arabs reckoned an hundred and twenty-four thouſand prophets before him; and there could be no great harm in adding one to the number; and men, they add, want to be deceived. But how can you juſtify a man who ſays to you, "believe that I have ſpoken to the angel Gabriel, or I will kill thee?"

How much preferable is a Confucius, the greateſt man that ever lived, without the light of revelation. He employs nothing but reaſon, and never lying, or the ſword: viceroy of a great province, he makes morality and the laws to flouriſh under his government: diſgraced and poor he continues to teach them: he practiſes them in grandeur. and in abaſement: he renders virtue truly amiable; and he has for his diſciples the wiſeſt, and moſt ancient people on the earth.

The count de Boulainvilliers, who had a great eſteem for Mahomet, may cry up the Arabians as much as he pleaſes. He cannot deny that

they were a nation of robbers. Before Mahomet they robbed in adoring the ſtars: under Mahomet they robbed in the name of God. They had, it is ſaid, the ſimplicity of the heroic times: but what were theſe heroic times? thoſe in which they cut each others throat for a well, or a ciſtern, as we now do for a province.

The firſt Muſſelmans were inſpired by Mahomet with the rage of enthuſiaſm. Nothing can be more terrible than a people, who, having nothing to loſe, fight at once from a deſire of plunder, and a ſpirit of religion.

It is true, there was not much ceremony in their proceedings. The contract of Mahomet's firſt marriage declares, that inaſmuch as Cadiſhca was in love with him, and he likewiſe with her, they thought proper to join themſelves in the bands of wedlock. There is the ſame ſimplicity in a genealogy which was compoſed for him; and in which he is made to deſcend from Adam, in a direct line, as ſome families of Spain and Scotland have ſince been made to do. Arabia had her Moreri, and her Mercure Galant.

The great prophet ſuffered the diſgrace ſo common to many huſbands; nor ought any one after him to complain of his fate. The name of the perſon who enjoyed the favours of his ſecond wife, the beautiful Aiſhca, is well known; he was called Affuan. Mahomet behaved with more dignity than Cæſar, who divorced his wife, ſaying that the wife of Cæſar ought not even to be ſuſpected. The prophet would not ſo much as ſuſpect his: he cauſed a chapter of the Koran to deſcend from heaven, to prove that his wife

was

was faithful; and this chapter, as well as the others, was written from all eternity.

People admire him for having raiſed himſelf from a dealer in camels to be a pontiff, a legiſlator, and a monarch; for having ſubdued Arabia, which was never conquered before; and for having given the firſt ſhock to the Roman empire in the Eaſt, and to that of Perſia. For my part, I admire him for having maintained peace in his own houſe amidſt ſuch a number of wives. He changed the face of a part of Europe, of one half of Aſia, and of almoſt all Africa; and his religion had well nigh ſubdued the univerſe.

Upon what trivial circumſtances do the great revolutions of this world depend! A blow of a ſtone a little more violent than that which he received in his firſt combat, would have given another turn to the courſe of human affairs.

Ali, his ſon-in-law, pretends, that when they were going to inter the prophet, they found him in a poſture in which dead bodies are ſeldom to be ſeen, and that his widow Aiſhca cried out; "Had I known that God had been ſo propitious to the defunct, I would inſtantly have run to him." We may ſay of him, "*Decet imperatorem ſtantem mori.*"

Never was the life of any man written with a more circumſtantial exactneſs than his. The ſmalleſt particulars of it are ſacred. We are diſtinctly informed of all that belonged to him. We are told that he had nine ſwords, three lances, three bows, ſeven cuiraſſes, three bucklers, twelve wives, a white cock, ſeven horſes, two mules, and four camels; not to mention the mare Borak, on which he aſcended to heaven.

But

But her he had only in loan; ſhe was the property of the angel Gabriel.

All his words have been collected. He ſaid, "That the enjoyment of women made him more fervent in prayer." And indeed, why might he not ſay grace, and return thanks in bed, as well as at a table? A fine woman is, at leaſt, as good as a ſupper. It is likewiſe pretended, that he was a great phyſician: if he was, he wanted nothing that could qualify him for deceiving mankind.

On the Management of publick Shows.

THE kings of France were formerly excommunicated; and from Philip I. to Lewis VIII. they were all laid under this ſentence, with great ſolemnity. The ſame was the fate of all the emperors from Henry IV. to Lewis of Bavaria incluſively The kings of England too have had a pretty tolerable ſhare of theſe preſents, from the court of Rome. Such was the folly of the times, and that folly coſt the lives of five or ſix hundred thouſand men. At preſent, people are content with excommunicating the repreſentatives of monarchs; I do not mean ambaſſadors, but players, who are kings and queens three or four times a week, and govern the univerſe to get a livelihood.

I hardly know any profeſſion except theirs, and that of the ſorcerers, that is now honoured with

with this mark of diſtinction. But as, during theſe ſixty or eighty years paſt, that ſound philoſophy has enlightened the world, there have been no ſorcerers; the only victims that are now left are Alexander, Cæſar, Athalia, Polyeuctes, Andromache, Brutus, Zara, and Harlequin.

The chief reaſon aſſigned for this conduct is, that theſe gentlemen and ladies repreſent the paſſions. But if a faithful picture of the human heart deſerves ſuch a horrid ſtigma, a more ſevere puniſhment ſurely ought to be inflicted on ſtatuaries and painters. There are many indecent pictures ſold publickly; whereas there is not a ſingle dramatic piece repreſented, that is not conſiſtent with the ſtricteſt decency. The Venus of Titian, and that of Corregio are entirely naked, and have always a dangerous influence on the morals of our modeſt youth; but the players only recite the admirable verſes of Cinna for about two hours; and that with the approbation of the magiſtrate, and under the ſanction of the royal authority. Why then are the living perſonages on the ſtage more ſeverely cenſured, than theſe mute comedians on canvaſs? "*Ut pictura poëſis erit.*" What would Sophocles, and Euripedes have ſaid, had they been able to foreſee that a people, who have only ceaſed to be barbarous by imitating them, would one day imprint ſuch a mark of diſgrace on the theatre, which in their time was held in ſuch honour and eſteem?

Æſopus and Roſcius were not Roman ſenators, it is true; but the Flamen never declared them infamous, nor was it ſuſpected that the

art

art of Terence reſembled that of Locuſta *. That great pope and great prince Leo X. to whom we owe the revival of good tragedies and comedies in Europe, and who cauſed ſo many theatrical pieces to be preſented in his palace, with ſo much magnificence, little imagined that ever the time would come, when in a part of Gaul the deſcendants of the Goths and Celtæ would think they had a right to diſgrace what he honoured. Had the cardinal de Richlieu lived who built the hall of the royal palace, and to whom France owes her theatre, he would not have long ſuffered theſe preſumptuous bigots to cover with infamy thoſe whom he employed to recite his own works.

It was the heretics, it muſt be owned, that firſt began to rail againſt the fineſt of all the arts. Leo X. revived the tragic ſcene; and that was enough to make the pretended reformers call it the work of the Devil. Thus the city of Geneva, and many illuſtrious hamlets in Switzerland, have been an hundred and fifty years without ſuffering a fiddle among them. The Janſeniſts, who now dance on the grave of St. Paris, to the great edification of the neighbours, in the laſt age diſſuaded a princeſs of Conti whom they governed, from ſuffering her ſon to learn to dance, inaſmuch as dancing is a prophane exerciſe. It was neceſſary, however, that he ſhould acquire a genteel air, and underſtand a

* Locuſta was an infamous woman, entertained and protected by Nero for her ſkill in preparing poiſons, which ſhe cauſed to be adminiſtered to Britannicus, and many others.

minuet;

minuet; but they would by no means allow a violin to be uſed; and the director, by way of accommodation, was at laſt brought to conſent, though with great reluctance, that the prince of Conti ſhould be taught to dance with caſtanets. Some Catholics of a Gothic taſte on this ſide the Mountains began to fear the reproaches of the reformers, and to cry out as loud as they; and thus by degrees was eſtabliſhed in France the cuſtom of ſtigmatizing Cæſar and Pompey, and refuſing certain ceremonies to certain perſons, hired by the king, and acting under the eye of the magiſtrate. People did not think worth while to exclaim againſt this abuſe; for who would chuſe to quarrel with men in power, and with men of the preſent times, for Phædra and the heroes of antiquity? They, therefore, contented themſelves with laughing at the abſurdity of theſe rigorous meaſures, and admiring in the mean time the maſter-pieces of the ſtage.

Rome, from which we have received our catechiſm, does not behave like us. She hath always tempered the laws, as the times and different exigencies required: ſhe hath always taken care to diſtinguiſh between thoſe impudent puppet-ſhews, which were formerly condemned with ſo much reaſon, and the theatrical pieces of Triſſin, and of ſo many biſhops and cardinals, who have contributed to the revival of tragedy. At preſent, plays are acted publickly in ſome religious houſes at Rome. The ladies go to them without ſcandal; nor do they believe, that dialogues repeated by perſons who ſtand upon boards are diabolically infamous. Even the play of

George

George Dandin has been repreſented at Rome by the religious, before a large company of eccleſiaſtics and ladies. The wiſe Romans are particularly careful not to excommunicate thoſe gentlemen who ſing the treble in the Italian operas; for it is enough in all conſcience to be caſtrated in this world, without being likewiſe damned in the other.

In the happy reign of Lewis XIV. there was in all the publick ſhows he exhibited a bench, which was called a bench of biſhops. I myſelf was a witneſs of the importunity with which in the minority of Lewis XV. the cardinal de Fleury, then biſhop of Frejus, was preſſed to revive this cuſtom. Other times, other manners! We are probably wiſer, than when all Europe came to admire our feſtivals, when Richlieu revived the theatre in France, and when Leo X. reſtored the Auguſtan age in Italy. But a time will come when our poſterity, on ſeeing the impertinent work of father le Brun, againſt the art of Sophocles, and the performances of our great men printed in the ſame age, will cry out with wonder, "Is it poſſible that the French can have been guilty of ſuch contradiction; and that the moſt abſurd barbariſm can have thus proudly raiſed its head, againſt the fineſt productions of the human mind?"

St. Thomas Aquinas, whoſe morals were as good as thoſe of Calvin, or father Queſnel; St. Thomas, I ſay, who had never ſeen a good comedy, nor never beheld any but the moſt wretched actors, imagined, however, that the theatre might be rendered uſeful. He had the good ſenſe to perceive, and the juſtice to acknowledge,

knowledge, the merit of this art, rude and unformed as it then was; and accordingly, he not only permitted but even approved it. St. Charles Barromæus himſelf examined the pieces that were acted at Milan; and authorized them by his approbation, and his ſeal.

Who after this would be ſo Gothic as to treat Rodrigues and Chimene as poiſoners? Would to Heaven that theſe barbarians, who are enemies to the fineſt of all the arts, had the piety of Polyeuctes, the clemency of Auguſtus, the virtue of Burrhus, and that they may end their days like the huſband of Alzira!

PREFACE.

PREFACE.

THE following piece of humour has been ſo frequently printed, that we could not refuſe it a place in this collection. It is an innocent burleſque on a ridiculous book, written by the preſident of an academy *, and publiſhed about the end of the year 1752. It was a very ſurpriſing thing to ſee a philoſopher aſſert, that there was no other proof of the being of a God, than an Algebraic calculation; that the human ſoul might be exalted to ſuch a degree of perfection, as might be capable of foretelling future events; and that a man might preſerve his life, for three or four hundred years, by ſtopping the pores of his body; together with ſeveral other notions no leſs extravagant. A mathematician of the Hague, having attacked the firſt of theſe propoſitions, and ſhewn it to be extremely falſe, the preſident brought a formal proceſs againſt him before his own academy, and found means to have him condemned as a forger. This piece of injuſtice arouſed the indignation of all the literati of Europe; and gave occaſion to the following pages, in which a conſtant alluſion is kept up to the ſeveral paſſages of the book, which was then the object of public deriſion. The reflexions are put into the mouth of a phyſician, until he effects a cure.

* This is a ſort of lampoon upon Mr. de Maupertuis, late preſident of the academy at Berlin, where he and Mr. de Voltaire had ſome perſonal diſputes, that were not much for the honour of philoſophy. *Diatribe*, which we have here rendered diſſertation, is a Greek word ſignifying delay or procraſtination; and *Akakia*, another Greek word, ſignifies ſimplicity.

A DIS-

A

DISSERTATION,

BY

DOCTOR AKAKIA,

Phyſician to the Pope.

NOTHING is more common in the preſent age, than for young and ignorant authors to uſher into the world under well-known names works unworthy of the ſuppoſed writers. There are quacks in every profeſſion. One of theſe impoſtors has had the impudence to aſſume the name of the preſident of a moſt illuſtrious academy, in order to vend ſome drugs of a very ſingular nature. It is certain that the reſpectable preſident is not the author of the books which are aſcribed to him; for that admirable philoſopher, who has diſcovered that nature always acts by the moſt ſimple laws, and that ſhe is ever ſparing in the means ſhe employs, would ſurely have ſpared his few readers the trouble of reading the ſame thing twice, firſt in the book entitled his Works; and then in that entitled his Letters. One third, at leaſt of the latter volume is copied literally from the former. This great man, who is ſo far removed from all ſuppoſition of impoſture, would never have publiſhed letters which were written to no-body, and far leſs would he have fallen into certain blunders which are excuſable only in a young author.

Though

Though I am fully convinced in my own mind that it is no regard to the intereſt of my profeſſion that now induces me to ſpeak; yet I may take the liberty, I hope, to find fault with this writer for treating phyſicians as he does his bookſellers. He propoſes to ſtarve us to death: he adviſes every one to withold his phyſician's fee, when unhappily the patient does not recover. "We do not pay, ſays he, a painter that hath made a bad picture." O, young man, how unjuſt and unreaſonable you are! Did not the duke of Orleans, regent of France, pay dearly for the daubings with which Coypel adorned the gallery of the Palais Royal? Does a client deprive his lawyer of his juſt fee, becauſe he has loſt his cauſe? A phyſician promiſes his aſſiſtance, and not a cure. He does all that lies in his power, and is paid accordingly. What! would you even be jealous of the phyſicians?

What, think you, would that man ſay, who had, for inſtance, a penſion of twelve hundred ducats for talking of mathematics and metaphyſics, for diſſecting a couple of toads, and making himſelf to be painted with a furred bonnet, what would he ſay ſhould the treaſurer accoſt him in this ſtrain? "Sir, we muſt deduct one hundred ducats from your ſalary, for having wrote that there are ſtars in the ſhape of millſtones; another hundred for ſaying that a comet will come and rob us of our moon, and even endanger the ſun itſelf; and a hundred ducats more for having fancied that comets, compoſed entirely of gold and diamonds, will fall upon the earth; you are fined in three hundred ducats for having affirmed that the fœtus is formed in the womb

of

of the mother by attraction *; that the left eye attracts the right leg †, &c. We cannot fine you in leſs than four hundred ducats, for having imagined that it is poſſible to diſcover the nature of the human ſoul, by means of opium; and by diſſecting the heads of giants, &c. &c. It is evident, that, by theſe means, the poor philoſopher would loſe the whole of his penſion: and would he be content, think you, if, after this, the phyſicians ſhould take it in their heads to laugh at him, and to affirm that rewards ought to be given to thoſe only who write uſeful things, and not to ſuch as are remarkable for nothing but an immoderate ambition of diſtinguiſhing themſelves in the world?

This inconſiderate youth reproaches my brother phyſicians with being too timid and diffident in their reſearches. He ſays we are indebted to chance, and to ſavage uncivilized nations for the only ſpecificks that are known; and that the phyſicians have never diſcovered one of them. We muſt inform this ſtripling, that it is chance alone that can teach us what medicines may be extracted from plants. Hippocrates, Boerhaave, Chirac, and Senac, could never have gueſſed at firſt ſight that the Jeſuit's bark would cure a fever; that rhubarb was a purgative; or poppies of a ſoporific nature. It is chance alone that can lead us to a diſcovery of the virtues of plants; and phyſicians can do no more than preſcribe theſe medicines according to the condition of the patient. They have likewiſe invented ſeveral medicines by the aſſiſtance of chemiſtry. They

* In the works and letters of Mr. de M.

† See the Venus Phyſique.

do

do not promiſe to cure always; but they promiſe to do all in their power to mitigate the pains of their fellow-creatures. Did ever this witty youth, who hath treated them with ſo much ſeverity, perform ſuch an important ſervice to mankind, as he who, contrary to all appearance, brought back from the gates of death the mareſchal de Saxe, after the victory of Fontenoy?

Our young philoſopher would have the phyſicians to reduce themſelves to a level with empirics, by baniſhing the theoretical part of their ſcience entirely. What would you think of a man who ſhould diſſuade you from employing architects to build houſes, and adviſe you to make uſe of none but maſons who cut ſtones at random?

He likewiſe gives us the wholeſome advice to neglect the ſtudy of anatomy. In this caſe we ſhall have the ſurgeons on our ſide. We are only ſurpriſed that the author, who lies under ſome ſmall obligations to the ſurgeons of Montpellier, for curing him of ſome diſeaſes which require a very intimate knowledge of the interior parts of the head, and of other branches of anatomy, ſhould be ſo extremely ungrateful.

The ſame author, little verſed, it would appear, in hiſtory, ſpeaking on the ſubject of making the puniſhment of criminals more uſeful to the ſtate by trying experiments on their bodies, ſays that this ſcheme has never been carried into execution. He is ignorant, poor man, of what all the world knows, that in the reign of Lewis XI. the experiment of cutting for the ſtone was made for the firſt time in France, on the body of a man condemned to death; that the late queen of England cauſed them to try the inoculation of the ſmall-

pox on four criminals; and that other examples of the ſame nature might be eaſily produced.

But, if our author is ignorant, it muſt be owned that he makes amends for that defect by the flights of a very ſingular imagination. He adviſes us, in quality of phyſician, to employ the effects of the centrifugal force to cure an apoplexy, and would have us to whirl the patient about as the boys do a whirligig. The notion, indeed, is none of his; but he gives it an air of novelty.

He adviſes us to cover the patient's body with roſin, or to pierce his ſkin with needles. If ever he practiſes medicine, and propoſes ſuch remedies, it is likely his patients will take his advice, and not pay their phyſician.

But what is very ſurpriſing is, that this declared enemy of the medical art, who would ſo unmercifully deprive us of our fees, propoſes, by way of accommodation, to ruin the patients. He ordains (for he is deſpotic) that every phyſician ſhould profeſs the cure of one diſeaſe only; ſo that, if a man has a gout, a fever, and a flux, ſore eyes, and a pain in his ear, he muſt pay five phyſicians inſtead of one. But perhaps his meaning is, that each of us ſhould have only a fifth part of the common fee; another inſtance of his malice. By and by, I imagine we ſhall hear of devotees being adviſed to have a particular director for every vice; one, for a ſerious concern about trifles; one for jealouſy, concealed under a ſerious and imperious air; one for the itch of forming cabals about nothing; and others for other vices: but let us not wander from the ſubject, but return to our brother phyſicians.

"The beſt phyſician," ſays he, is he that reaſons leaſt." He ſeems to have adhered as

ſtrictly to this maxim in philoſophy as ever father Canaïe did in theology; and yet, in ſpite of his hatred to reaſoning, we can eaſily perceive that he has made ſome profound reflexions on the art of prolonging life. In the firſt place, he agrees with all men of ſenſe, (and we ſincerely congratulate him on agreeing with them for once) that our forefathers lived from eight to nine hundred years.

Having then diſcovered by the force of his own genius, and independent of Leibnitz, that "the full growth of a man ſhould be fixed, not at the age of ſtrength and manhood, but at the point of death, he propoſes to ward off this point in the ſame manner as we preſerve eggs, by hindering them from hatching." This, undoubtedly, is a moſt charming ſecret, and we would adviſe him to ſecure to himſelf the honour of the diſcovery in ſome hen-rooſt, or by a criminal ſentence of ſome academy.

From this ſhort account it plainly appears that if theſe imaginary letters were written by a preſident, it muſt have been by a preſident of Bedlam; and that they are, in fact, as we have already ſaid, the work of a young man who has endeavoured to ſett off his paltry production with the name of a philoſopher reſpected, as is well known, over all Europe, and who has conſented to have himſelf declared a "Great Man," We have ſometimes ſeen at a carnival in Italy Harlequin diſguiſed in the garb of an archbiſhop; but we ſoon found it to be Harlequin, by his manner of pronouncing the benediction: ſooner or later truth will prevail: this brings to my mind a fable of Fontaine:

Un petit bout d'oreille échapé par malheur
Découvrit la fourbe & l'arreur.

Here we ſee the whole ears.

All things conſidered, we refer to the Holy Inquiſition the book aſcribed to the preſident; and we ſubmit to the deciſions of that learned tribunal, in which, it is well known, phyſicians have the moſt implicit faith.

Decree of the Inquiſition of Rome.

WE, father Pancratius, &c. inquiſitor for the faith, have read the diſſertation of M. Akakia, phyſician in ordinary to the pope, without comprehending the meaning of the ſaid diſſertation, or finding any thing it contrary to the faith, or the Decretals. But we cannot ſay the ſame of the works and letters of the young anonymous author, who hath aſſumed the name of a preſident.

After calling in the direction of the Holy Spirit to our aſſiſtance, we have found in the ſaid works, that is, in the quarto volume of this anonymous author, many propoſitions raſh, ill-ſounding, heretical, or tending to hereſy. We therefore condemn them collectively, ſeparately, and reſpectively.

We eſpecially particularly anathematize the Eſſay on Coſmology, in which the author, blinded by the principles of the children of Belial, and accuſtomed to blame every thing, inſinuates, contrary to the holy ſcriptures, that it is a fault in Providence to allow ſpiders to catch flies; and that there is no other proof of the being of a God than in Z equal to B C, divided by A plus B.

Now theſe characters being drawn from the art of conjuring, and plainly diabolical, we declare them to be repugnant to the authority of the Holy See.

And as, according to cuſtom, we know nothing of phyſics, metaphyſics, mathematics, &c. we have enjoined reverend profeſſors of philoſophy of the College of Wiſdom to examine the works and letters of the young anonymous author, and to give us a faithful account of the ſame. So help them God.

Judgment of the Profeſſors of the College of Wiſdom.

1. WE declare that the laws relating to the ſhock of bodies perfectly hard, are childiſh and imaginary, inaſmuch as there are no bodies perfectly hard, though there are ſeveral hard minds, upon which we have in vain endeavoured to make an impreſſion.

2. The aſſertion, that "the product of the ſpace multiplied by the velocity is always a minimum," ſeems to be falſe; for this product is ſometimes a maximum, according to the opinion of Leibnitz, and as may be eaſily proved. It would appear that the young author took only one half of M. Leibnitz's idea; and we, therefore, acquit him of the guilt of having ever comprehended one whole idea of M. Leibnitz.

3. We likewiſe adhere to the cenſure which M. Akakia, phyſician to the pope, and ſo many others, have paſſed on the works of this anonymous author, and eſpecially on the "Venus Phyſique." We adviſe the young author, that when he proceeds with his wife (if he has one) to the work

work of generation, he will not think that the fœtus is formed in the womb, by means of attraction; and we exhort him, if he commits the ſin of the fleſh, not to envy the lots of ſnails in the act of love, nor that of toads *, and to be leſs ambitious of imitating the ſtile of Fontenelle, when riper years ſhall have formed his taſte.

We come now to the examination of the Letters, which, in our opinion, are doubly criminal, as they contain almoſt all that is to be found in the works; and we exhort him not to ſell the ſame goods twice under different names, becauſe it is not conſiſtent with the character of a fair trader, which he ought to maintain.

Examination of the Letters of a young Author diſguiſed under the name of a Preſident.

1. IT may not be improper, in the firſt place, to inform this young author, that foreſight † in man is not called Foreknowledge; that the word Foreknowledge is ſacred to God alone, and denominates that power by which he looks into futurity. He ought to be acquainted with the meaning of words before he ſets himſelf to write. He ought to know that the ſoul does not perceive itſelf: it ſees external objects, but cannot ſee itſelf; ſuch is its preſent condition. The young writer may eaſily correct theſe trifling errors.

2. It is falſe that "the memory makes us loſe more than we gain by it." We muſt inform this candidate for literary fame, that the memory is the faculty of retaining ideas; that without this

* i. e. of a coitus duplex.

† Letters of a native of St. Malo.

faculty we could not even compoſe a bad book, could hardly know any thing at all, would not be able to conduct ourſelves in any ſtation of life, but would be left in a ſtate of abſolute ignorance and ſtupidity. We would therefore recommend it to this young man to improve his memory.

3 We are obliged to declare that the following notion is ridiculous, to wit, "that the ſoul is like a body which recovers its former ſtate after having been put in motion; and that in the ſame manner the ſoul returns to its ſtate of tranquility or uneaſineſs, which ever of the two be moſt natural to it." The author has not expreſſed himſelf with accuracy. He probably meant to ſay, that every one returns to his natural character; that a man, for inſtance, after having forced himſelf to act the philoſopher for a few days, returns to his ordinary trifles, &c. But ſuch trivial truths as theſe deſerve not to be repeated. It is the misfortune of young men to think that they are capable of giving an air of novelty to the moſt common things, by wrapping them up in obſcure expreſſions.

4. The author is miſtaken in ſaying, that extenſion is no more than a perception of the mind. If ever he applies himſelf to the ſtudy of philoſophy, he will find that extenſion is not like ſounds and colours, which exiſt only in our ſenſations, as every ſchool-boy knows.

5. With regard to the Germans, whom he undervalues, and treats as dunces in plain terms, he appears to us, in this particular, to be unjuſt and ungrateful: this is not merely to want knowledge, it is to want politeneſs. This young man may probably imagine that he is capable of inventing

ſomething

ſomething after Leibnitz; but we will tell him that it is not to him that we are indebted for the invention of gun-powder.

6. This author, we are afraid, may tempt ſome of his fellow-ſtudents to ſearch for the philoſophers ſtone; for he ſays, "that, in whatever light we view it, we cannot prove it to be impoſſible." He owns, it is true, that it would be a fooliſh thing for any one to ſquander away his eſtate in ſuch a reſearch; but as in talking of the "ſum of happineſs," he ſays, that we cannot demonſtrate the truth of the Chriſtian religion, which, however, many people profeſs, it may happen *à fortiori* that ſome men may ruin themſelves in ſearching for the grand ſecret, as according to him, it may poſſibly be found.

7. We paſs over ſeveral things that would weary the reader's patience, and are unworthy of the inquiſitor's notice; but we believe he will be greatly ſurpriſed to hear that this young ſtudent is for diſſecting the brains of giants ſix feet high, and of hairy men with tails, the better to diſcover the nature of the human mind; that he propoſes to modify the ſoul with opium and dreams; and that he undertakes to produce large ſnakes from other ſnakes with dough, and fiſhes with grains of corn. We have taken this opportunity of diverting the inquiſitor.

8. But the inquiſitor will not laugh when he is informed that every man may become a prophet; for the author finds no more difficulty in ſeeing the future than the paſt. He avers that the arguments in favour of judicial aſtrology, are as ſtrong as thoſe againſt it. He then aſſures us, that the perceptions of the paſt, the preſent, and the future, differ only in the greater or leſs activity of the

ſoul. He hopes that a little more heat and "exaltation" in the fancy may ſerve to point out the future, as the memory ſhews the paſt.

We are unanimouſly of opinion that his brain is exalted to a very high degree, and that he will ſoon commence a prophet. We cannot as yet determine whether he will be one of the greater or leſſer prophets; but we are much afraid that he will prove a prophet of evil, ſince even in his treatiſe on happineſs, he talks of nothing but calamities. He ſays, particularly, that all fools are unhappy. We ſend our compliments of condolance to people of this character; but if his exalted ſoul hath looked into futurity, did it not perceive ſomething ridiculous in the proſpect?

9. He ſeems to be deſirous of going to the ſouthern hemiſphere, though, on reading his book, one would be tempted to think that he had juſt returned from thence; and yet he appears to be ignorant that it is a long time ſince the country of Frederic Henry, ſituated beyond the fortieth degree of ſouthern latitude, was diſcovered: but we aſſure him before hand, that if, inſtead of going to the ſouthern hemiſphere, he ſhould reſolve to ſail in a direct line to the Arctic Pole, no-body will embark with him.

10. We muſt further inform him, that it will be extremely difficult to make, as he propoſes, a hole that ſhall reach to the centre of the earth (where he probably means to conceal himſelf from the diſgrace to which the publication of ſuch abſurd principles has expoſed him.) This hole could not be made without digging up about three or four hundred leagues of earth; a circumſtance that might diſorder the balance of Europe.

To

To conclude, we entreat Doctor Akakia to preſcribe to him ſome cooling medicines; and we exhort the author to apply to his ſtudies in ſome univerſity, and to be more modeſt for the future.

Should ever a company of philoſophers be ſent to Finland, to verify, if poſſible, by certain meaſurations, the grand diſcoveries which Newton made by his ſublime theory of gravitation, and centrifugal force, and ſhould he happen to be one of the number, let him not endeavour to be always raiſing himſelf above his companions, nor cauſe himſelf to he painted as levelling the earth with his ſingle hand, as Atlas is repreſented ſupporting the heavens on his ſhoulders; as if, forſooth, he had changed the face of the univerſe, becauſe he had taken his diverſion in a town where there was a Swediſh garriſon. Let him likewiſe abſtain from quoting the polar circle on every occaſion.

Should any of his fellow-ſtudents propoſe to him in a friendly manner an opinion different from his? Should he aſſure him that he is ſupported by the authority of Leibnitz, and of ſeveral other philoſophers, and particularly ſhew him a letter of M. Leibnitz, which the novice flatly contradicts, let not the ſaid novice raſhly imagine, and give out in every place, that his antagoniſt has forged a letter of M. Leibnitz, to rob him of the glory of being an original.

Let him not take an error into which he has fallen, upon a point of Dynamics, which is of no uſe in practice, for an admirable diſcovery.

Should this companion, after having frequently ſhewn him his work, in which he attacks

him with equal prudence and politeneſs, and in which he even pays him compliments, commit it to the preſs with his conſent, let him take care not to repreſent this work of his adverſary as a crime of academical treaſon.

Should his companion repeatedly aſſure him that he has in his poſſeſſion this letter of Leibnitz, as well as ſeveral others, which he received from a man who has been dead for ſome years, let not the novice baſely take advantage of this circumſtance, nor employ the ſame artifices as were uſed by a certain perſon *, againſt the Mairans, the Caſſinis, and other true philoſophers: let him not demand in ſuch a frivolous diſpute, that the dead ſhould riſe from the grave to aſcertain the authenticity of a letter of M. Leibnitz; but let him reſerve this miracle to the time of his commencing prophet; let him not embroil people in an inſignificant quarrel, which the vanity of the author would fain render important; nor let him preſume to engage the gods in a war of rats and frogs. Let him not write letter upon letter to a great princeſs, in order to ſilence his antagoniſt, and to tie up his hands, that ſo he may aſſaſſinate him at pleaſure †.

Let him not, in a paltry diſpute on Dynamics, ſummon, by an academical authority, a profeſſor to appear within a month; nor let

* The perſon here meant had cruelly harraſſed the Meſſieurs de Mairan and Caſſini at Paris.

† He wrote two letters to the princeſs of Orange, entreating her to impoſe ſilence on his antagoniſt M. K. who was librarian to that princeſs, and whom he had condemned as a forger.

him

him condemn the ſaid profeſſor of contumacy, as an invader of his glory, as a forger and falſifier of letters; more eſpecially as it is certain that the letters of Leibnitz are genuine, and that thoſe written under the name of a preſident were no more received by his correſpondents than they were read by the public.

Let him not endeavour to deprive any one of the liberty of a juſt defence; but let him remember that he that is in the wrong, and endeavours to diſhonour him that is in the right, in effect diſhonours himſelf.

Let him be perſuaded that all men of letters are equal, and we are ſure he will gain by this equality.

Let him never be ſo fooliſh as to inſiſt that nothing ſhould be printed without his order.

Finally, we exhort him to be of a teachable diſpoſition, to apply to the ſtudy of ſound philoſophy, and not to vain cabals; for what a ſcholar gains in intrigues he loſes in genius, in the ſame manner as in mechanics, what we gain in time we loſe in power. We have but too frequently ſeen young authors, who have begun by raiſing high expectations and publiſhing excellent works, and at laſt by writing nothing but nonſenſe; becauſe inſtead of able writers they wanted to be ſkilful courtiers, ſubſtituted vanity in place of ſtudy, and that diſſipation which weakens the minds in place of that recollection which ſtrengthens it. They have been commended, and they have ceaſed to be commendable: they have been rewarded, and they have ceaſed to deſerve rewards: they have endeavoured to make a figure in the

world, and their names have been entirely annihilated: for when in an author a ſum of errors is equal to a ſum of ridiculous propoſitions, " his exiſtence is equal to nothing *."

* Notwithſtanding all our author's wit and ſatire, Mr. de Maupertuis will be handed down to poſterity, with the character of an able mathematician.

A FU-

A

FUNERAL EULOGIUM

ON THE

OFFICERS

Who died in the War of 1741.

A PEOPLE who ſet an example of every thing good and great to all the other nations of the earth, who taught them all the arts, and even the art of war, the maſters of the Romans, who have been our maſters, the Greeks I mean, among their excellent inſtitutions, which are ſtill the object of our admiration, eſtabliſhed the cuſtom of conſecrating by funeral eulogiums the memory of thoſe citizens who had ſhed their blood in the ſervice of their country: a cuſtom worthy of Athens; worthy of a brave and humane nation, and worthy of us! Why then ſhould we not follow ſuch a noble precedent; we who have ſo long, and in ſo many reſpects, been the happy rivals of that illuſtrious nation? why confine ourſelves to the ſervile cuſtom of celebrating after their death none but thoſe, who being rendered conſpicuous in the world by their exalted ſtations, have been ſurfeited with the incenſe of praiſe during their lives?

It

It is doubtleſs juſt, it is even conducive to the intereſts of ſociety, to praiſe a Titus, a Trajan, a Lewis XII. a Henry IV. and others of the like character: but ſhall we always pay to the dignity of rank, thoſe duties which are ſo intereſting and agreeable when they are paid to the merit of the perſon? thoſe duties, which are ſo vain when they are only a neceſſary part of the funeral pomp; when the heart is not affected; when the vanity of the orator ſpeaks to the vanity of the audience; and when in a ſet diſcourſe, and in forced diviſions, we exhauſt our own invention and our hearers patience in unmeaning eulogiums, which paſs away with the ſmoke of the funeral lights? at leaſt, if we muſt always celebrate thoſe who have been great, let us ſometimes revive the memory of thoſe who have been uſeful. Happy beyond all doubt, (if the voice of the living can pierce the darkſome tomb) happy the magiſtrate, immortalized by the ſame organ who cauſed ſo many tears to be ſhed for the death of Mary of England, and who was worthy to celebrate the praiſes of the great Condé! But if the aſhes of Michael le Tellier received ſuch ſignal honours, is there a good citizen that does not now aſk whether the ſame honours have been paid to the great Colbert, to that man who diffuſed ſuch an exuberance of plenty by reviving induſtry; who carried his extenſive views to the extremities of the globe; who rendered France the miſtreſs of the ſeas, and to whom we owe a grandeur and felicity long unknown?

O ye immortal ſhades! O ye names of thoſe happy few who have ſerved the ſtate with fidelity,

lity, be ye ever held in grateful remembrance; but eſpecially periſh not ye entirely, ye warriors, who have died in our defence. It was by your blood that we purchaſed our victories: it was upon your mangled and panting bodies that your fellow-ſoldiers advanced to the enemy, and mounted ſo many ramparts: it is to you we owe a glorious peace, the price of your deſtruction. The more war is conſidered as a dreadful ſcourge, comprehending all manner of crimes and calamities, the more ſincere ſhould be our gratitude to theſe our brave countrymen, who have died to give us that happy peace which ought to be the only end of war, and the ſole object of ambition to a wiſe monarch.

Weak and fooliſh mortals as we are, who reaſon ſo wiſely on our various duties, who make ſuch profound reſearches into the nature of our own conſtitution, and into the ſources of our frailties and calamities, we make our temples perpetually to reſound with our reproaches and condemnations: we anathematize the ſlighteſt irregularities of conduct, and the moſt ſecret indulgences of the heart: we thunder againſt vices and againſt faults, blameable indeed, but which hardly diſturb the peace of ſociety. But what voice, commiſſioned to teach virtue, has ever been raiſed againſt this crime, which is ſo great and ſo univerſal; againſt that deſtructive rage which transforms into beaſts of prey men who were born to live like brothers; againſt thoſe barbarous depredations and ſhocking cruelties, which make the earth a ſcene of robbery and deſolation, and convert flouriſhing and populous cities into horrid and gloomy tombs? The violation of treaties the

moſt

moſt ſacred and ſolemn, the groſſneſs of thoſe impoſtures which precede the horrors of war; the impudence of thoſe calumnies which fill the declarations of the contending parties; the infamy of thoſe rapines which are capitally puniſhed in private men, but extolled as acts of heroiſm in the leaders of nations; theft, robbery, ſacking of cities, bankrupts, and the ruin of thouſands of wealthy merchants; their families wandering from place to place, and in vain begging an alms at the gates of publicans enriched with their ſpoils; theſe are a few of the many crimes and calamities that are the conſtant concomitants of war: and yet theſe crimes are committed without the leaſt remorſe; and the miniſters of the goſpel thunder in their pulpits againſt the dreſs of the ladies, and againſt the exhibition of plays, which are not only innocent but uſeful.

From the banks of the Po to thoſe of the Danube they bleſs in the name of the ſame God, the colours under which march thouſands of mercenary murderers, who from a ſpirit of lewdneſs, debauchery, and rapine, have left their native fields. They go and change their maſters: they expoſe themſelves to an infamous puniſhment for the ſake of the moſt trifling advantage. The day of battle comes; and the ſoldier, who had hardly ranged himſelf under the colours of his country, frequently ſheds without remorſe the blood of his fellow-citizens. He impatiently waits for the moment, when in the field of ſlaughter, he may tear from the dying ſome wretched ſpoils, which are ſnatched from himſelf by other hands. Such is too often the ſoldier; ſuch is that blind

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and ſavage multitude which is employed to change the fate of empires, and to raiſe the monuments of glory. Viewed in one collective body, and marching under the command of a great captain, they form the moſt auguſt and the moſt charming ſpectacle in the world. Taken ſeparately, and in the exceſſes of drunkenneſs and brutal debauchery (if you except a ſmall number) they are the dregs of nations.

Such is not the officer: jealous of his own honour, and of that of his ſovereign; braving death in cold blood, though poſſeſſed of every advantage that can make him in love with life; chearfully quitting the pleaſures of ſociety for the dangers that make nature tremble; humane, generous, and compaſſionate, while barbarity rages all around him; born for the ſweets of ſociety, as well as for the dangers of war; equally polite and brave, he is frequently adorned with learning, and ſtill more by the graces of the mind. Such is the character which foreigners give of our officers: they confeſs more particularly, that when the too ardent heat of youth is tempered by a little experience, they make themſelves beloved even by their enemies. But if their graceful and open behaviour have been ſometimes able to ſoften the moſt barbarous minds, what has not their valour performed?

Theſe are they who defended for ſo many months the capital of Bohemia, conquered by their hands in ſo ſhort a time; they who attacked and even beſieged their beſiegers; who fought ſuch long battles in their trenches; who braved the enemy, hunger, death, and the uncommon ſeverity of the ſeaſon, in that memorable march,

march, not ſo long indeed as that of the Greeks under Xenophon, but as painful and as hazardous. We have ſeen them, under the conduct of a general equally brave and vigilant, precipitate their enemies from the top of the Alps, victorious at once over all the obſtacles which natnre, art, and valour oppoſed to their invincible courage. Ye fields of Fontenoy, ye banks of the Scheld and the Maeſe, ſtained with their blood, it was on your plains that their valour brought victory to the feet of that king, whom the nations combined againſt him ought to have choſen for their arbiter! What noble exploits were performed by theſe heroes, the number of whom is hardly known?

In what then were the centurions and tribunes of the Roman legions their ſuperiors? in what did they excel them, if it was not, perhaps, in their invariable love of military diſcipline? The ancient Romans, it is true, eclipſed all the other nations of Europe, when Greece was ſunk in effeminacy, and divided in her councils, and when other nations were as yet barbarians, deſtitute of good laws, knowing how to fight, and ignorant of the art of war, incapable of uniting their joint efforts againſt the common foe, without commerce, without arts, and without every reſource that could enable them to preſerve their liberties. No nation has ever equalled the ancient Romans. But Europe, taken together, in its preſent condition, is greatly ſuperior to that conquering and legiſlative people, whether we conſider the many branches of knowledge that have been brought to perfection, or the many new diſcoveries that have been made; whether we

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ſurvey that extenſive and advantageous commerce which unites both worlds, or thoſe rich and flouriſhing cities raiſed in places which under the Conſuls and Cæſars, were no better than barren deſerts; whether we caſt our eyes on thoſe numerous and diſciplined armies which defend twenty kingdoms bleſſed with a regular government; or endeavour to pierce the veil of that policy, ever deep and ever active, which holds the balance among ſo many nations. In a word, that ſpirit of jealouſy itſelf which reigns among the moderns, which excites their genius, and animates their labours, ſerves to raiſe Europe to a pitch of grandeur greatly ſuperior to what we admire in ancient Rome, without being either able or willing to reſemble it.

But is there a nation in the world that can boaſt of containing ſuch a number of excellent officers as ours? Sometimes, in other countries, men enter into the ſervice in order to make their fortunes; among us they laviſh away their fortunes for the mere pleaſure of ſerving: elſewhere they ſell their blood to foreign maſters; here they burn with the deſire of ſacrificing their lives for their king: there they march becauſe they are paid; here they fly to death, in order to obtain the approbation of their maſter; and honour has always done greater things than intereſt.

In ſpeaking of ſuch noble exploits and ſuch glorious actions, we frequently diſpenſe with the tribute of gratitude, by ſaying that ambition was the ſpring of all. But this is the logic of the ungrateful. They who ſerve us, I own, would wiſh to riſe in the ſervice; yes, they are animated by that noble ambition, without which

which there would never be a great man. And indeed if they had not in their eyes thoſe grand objects that redouble the love of their duty, they would be but poorly recompenſed by the public, who, though they are ſometimes warm and even precipitate in their praiſes, are always more apt to cenſure; paſſing from enthuſiaſm to indifference, and from indifference to forgetfulneſs.

Sibarites, as we are, who live at eaſe in our flouriſhing cities, employed in the refinements of luxury, become inſenſible to every thing, and even to pleaſure itſelf, through an exceſs of indulgence; tired with thoſe daily diverſions, the leaſt of which would have charmed our anceſtors, and ſatiated with continual repaſts, more delicious than the feaſts of kings; amidſt ſo many pleaſures, at once ſo accumulated and ſo little enjoyed; ſurrounded by ſo many arts and finiſhed performances, ſo perfect and ſo neglected; intoxicated and lulled aſleep, as it were, in the boſom of peace and ſelf-conceit, we hear the news of a battle; we awake from our pleaſing lethargy to aſk with eagerneſs the particulars that are talked of at random, to cenſure the general, to diminiſh the loſs of the enemy, and to magnify our own. Mean while, five or ſix hundred families in the kingdom are either bathed in tears, or filled with the moſt dreadful apprehenſions. They groan, and retiring into the moſt ſecret parts of their houſes, demand from heaven their brothers, their huſbands, and their children. The peaceful inhabitants of Paris repair in the evening to the theatre, whither they are drawn by cuſtom, rather than by inclination; and if at the repaſt,

which

which ſucceeds the play, they happen to talk of the deceaſed with whom they were acquainted, they do it ſometimes with indifference; ſometimes by reviving the memory of their faults, when they ought only to remember their loſs; or even ſometimes by exerciſing that eaſy and miſchievous talent of malicious wit againſt them, as if they were ſtill living.

But when we hear that a reverſe of fortune, ſuch as the greateſt commanders have in all ages experienced, has retarded the progreſs of our arms, we are then thrown into the deepeſt deſpair; we then put on the appearance of fear, without feeling the leaſt real apprehenſion. Our bitter reproaches perſecute even in the grave the general, whoſe days have been cut ſhort in an unſucceſsful engagement *. But do we know what were his deſigns, and his reſources? or, can we from our gilded rooms, which we have hardly ever left, diſcern, with a glance of the eye, the particular ſpot on which he fought? he whom you accuſe may have erred; but he died fighting for you. What! ſhall our books, our ſchools, and our hiſtorical declamations, inceſſantly repeat the name of a Cinegerus, who, having loſt his arms in ſeizing a Perſian bark, endeavoured in vain to hold it with his teeth? and ſhall we blame our countryman, who loſt his life in ſnatching in the ſame manner, the paliſades of the enemy's entrenchments at the battle of Exilles, when he was no longer able to ſeize them with his wounded hands?

* The Chevalier de Belleiſle.

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Let us not fill our minds with these examples of antiquity, oftentimes too slightly proved, and greatly exaggerated; but let us reserve some room, at least, for those instances of heroism, whether successful or unsuccessful, which our fellow-citizens have given. Was not the young Brienne who, on having his arm broke at the battle of Exilles, mounted the ladder, crying, "I have another left for my king and my country*;" was not such a man equal to a native of Latium or Attica? and ought not all those, who like him advanced to meet the death they could not give to their enemies, ought not they to be dearer to us than the ancient warriors of a foreign land? did not they merit a hundred times more praise, and acquire more glory by dying under the inaccessible bulwarks, than their enemies did in defending themselves with safety, and in killing them without difficulty or danger?

What shall I say of those who died at the battle of Dettingen; a battle so well planned, and so ill conducted, and in which the general wanted only to be obeyed, in order to put an end to the war? Among those whose unsuccessful valour and untimely death history shall

* This would have been a noble declaration had he been fighting in defence of his country, instead of invading the dominions of another prince, in order to gratify the ambition of his sovereign. It would have become a Spartan at Thermopylæ, but appeared ridiculous in the mouth of a soldier in the army of Xerxes: the first was a true patriot in the most honourable sense of the word: the other was the desperate slave and wicked instrument of usurping tyranny.

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celebrate, ſhall we forget a young Bouflers *, a child of ten years of age, who having a leg broken in that battle, cauſed it to be cut off, and died without complaint? an inſtance of fortitude rarely to be found among warriors, and the only one ever given by a boy of that age!

If we turn our eyes to actions, not more brave, indeed, but more fortunate, how many heroes do we find whoſe names and atchievements, ought for ever to be in our mouths! how many countries ſprinkled with the nobleſt blood, and famous for the moſt glorious victories! There were raiſed againſt us an hundred bulwarks, which are now no more. What are become of thoſe fortifications of Fribourg, bathed with blood, tottering under their defenders, and ſurrounded with the lifeleſs bodies of the beſiegers? We ſtill ſee the ramparts of Namur, and thoſe caſtles which make the aſtoniſhed traveller cry, "How could they reduce this fortreſs which touched the clouds!" We ſtill behold Oſtend, which formerly ſuſtained ſieges of three years continuance, and which in five days ſurrendered to our victorious arms. Every plain, every city in theſe countries, is a monument of our glory; but what has this glory coſt!

O ye happy people, give, at leaſt, to your countrymen who have died the victims of this glory, or who ſtill ſurvive a part of themſelves, the rewards which their aſhes or their wounds demand. If you refuſe them this boon, the

* Bouflers de Remiancour, nephew to the duke de Bouflers.

trees,

trees, the fields of Flanders will aſſume a voice, and tell you, it was here that the modeſt and intrepid Luttaux *, loaded with years, and exhauſted by a long ſervice, wounded already in two places, weak, and loſing blood, cried out, "We muſt not now think of preſerving life; we muſt endeavour to render the remains of it uſeful:" and leading back to the combat the diſperſed troops, received the mortal blow, which brought him at laſt to the grave. It was there that the colonel of the French guards, going firſt to reconnoitre the enemy, was the firſt that periſhed in that bloody battle, and expired offering prayers for his king and his country. At a greater diſtance died the nephew of the famous archbiſhop of Cambray, the inheritor of the virtues of that excellent man, who rendered virtue truly amiable.

How juſtly then did the poſts of the fathers become the inheritance of the ſons! Who could feel the leaſt ſpark of envy, when, on the ramparts of Tournay, one of thoſe ſubterranean thunders which baffle the efforts of valour, and elude the precautions of prudence, having carried away the bloody and ſcattered limbs of the colonel of Normandy, the regiment was given the ſame day to the ſon, and that invincible body were hardly ſenſible of having changed their leader. Thus that foreign troop, which has become ſo national, and which bears the name of Dillon, has ſeen

* Lieutenant-colonel of the guards, and lieutenant-general.

† The marquis de Fenelon, lieutenant-general and ambaſſador in Holland.

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ſons and brothers rapidly ſucceed their fathers and brothers, who fell in battle. Thus the brave D'Aubeterre, the only colonel killed at the ſiege of Bruſſels, was replaced by his courageous brother. Why was it neceſſary that death ſhould deprive us of him likewiſe?

The government of Flanders, that eternal theatre of war, is juſtly fallen to the ſhare of the warrior who expoſed his life ſo frequently in one day at the battle of Rocou *. His father marched by his ſide at the head of his regiment, and taught him to command and to conquer. † Death, who reſpected this generous and tender parent in the battle of Rocou, where he was continually hovering around him, waited for him in Genoa under a different form: there he periſhed, grieving that he could not ſhed his blood on the baſtions of the beſieged city: but with the conſolation of leaving Genoa free, and carrying with him to the grave the title of its deliverer.

Wherever we turn our eyes, whether to that city delivered from oppreſſion, or to the Po, and the Teſſin, to the top of the Alps, or to the banks of the Scheld, the Maeſe, and the Danube, we every where behold actions worthy of immortality, or deaths which deſerve our eternal lamentations.

* The duc de Bouflers, a lieutenant-general in the army, put himſelf with his ſon, a youth of fifteen yetrs of age, at the head of that young man's regiment: he received ten bullets in his cloaths; and afterwards died at Genoa.

† Are not theſe good ſpecimens of the bathos ſimilar to the following lines:

And thou Dalhouſie, the great God of war,
Lieutenant-colonel to the earl of Mar,

We muſt be ſtupid not to admire ſuch heroic atchievements, and barbarous not to be affected with the melancholy ſcenes they occaſion. Let us put ourſelves for a moment in the place of a fearful ſpouſe, embracing in her children the image of her young huſband, whom ſhe tenderly loves; while the warrior, who had fought danger on ſo many occaſions, and had been wounded ſo frequently, marches againſt the enemy, in the ſuburbs of Genoa, at the head of his brave troop; that man who, after the example of his family, at once cultivated the ſtudy of letters and the art of war, and whoſe genius was equal to his valour, receives the fatal blow he had ſo long fought: he dies: at this news the diſconſolate half of himſelf faints away in the midſt of her children, who are not yet capable of being ſenſible of their loſs. Here a mother and a wife reſolve to ſet out for Flanders, to ſuccour a young hero, whoſe wiſdom and valour, greater than his years, juſtly procured him the affection of the dauphin, and ſeemed to promiſe him a glorious life; but while they are flattering themſelves with the agreeable hopes of preſerving his life by their tender care, they are told that he is dead*. What a moment! what a fatal blow to the daughter of an unfortunate emperor, paſſionately fond of her huſband, who is her only conſolation, her only hope in a foreign country, to be told, "Never more will you ſee the tender ſpouſe for whom alone you deſire to live†!"

* The count de Froulai. † The count de Baviere.

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A mother flies, without ſtopping, into Flanders, amidſt the cruel agonies into which ſhe is thrown by the wound of her young ſon *. Already had ſhe ſeen, in the battle of Rocou, his body pierced and torn with one of thoſe terrible wounds which leave the ſurvivor only a languiſhing life: this time ſhe thinks herſelf too happy: ſhe returns thanks to heaven on ſeeing her ſon deprived only of an arm, when ſhe trembled with the apprehenſion of finding him in his grave.

In this review let us neither follow the order of time nor that of our exploits and loſſes. Our feelings diſdain the confinement of rules. I tranſport myſelf to the fields in the neighbourhood of Augſburg, where the father of the young warrior of whom I am now ſpeaking, ſaved the remains of our army, and delivered them from the purſuit of the enemy, whom numbers and treachery rendered greatly ſuperior. But in the execution of this difficult taſk, we loſt the laſt branch of the houſe of Rupelmonde; that officer ſo learned and ſo amiable, who had ſtudied the art of war with the moſt profound attention, and who joined intrepidity of ſoul, ſolidity of judgment, and brilliancy of wit, to the moſt polite and engaging addreſs: he leaves a wife and a mother worthy of ſuch a ſon, bathed in tears and plunged into a ſtate of the deepeſt melancholy and dejection.

Now ye ſcornful and trifling minds, who laviſh your inſulting and miſplaced raillery on

* The marquis de Segur.

all that ſoftens the noble and tender heart; ye who in the ſtriking events which determine the fate of kingdoms, ſeek only to diſtinguiſh yourſelves by thoſe puns and jeſts which you call wit, and who, on that account, pretend to a kind of ſuperiority in the world, exert here, if ye dare, the deſpicable efforts of a weak and barbarous imagination: or rather, if ye have the leaſt ſpark of humanity, join in the common grief, and mingle your tears with thoſe of the public. But are ye worthy to weep?

Let not thoſe eſpecially who have been the ſharers of ſo many dangers, and the witneſſes of ſo many loſſes, contract in the voluptuous indolence of our cities, and in the lightneſs of converſation, that habit to which our nation is ſo much addicted, of diffuſing an air of ridicule and deriſion on all that is moſt glorious in life, and moſt terrible in death. Would they be ſo fooliſh as thus to degrade themſelves, and to tarniſh what it is their intereſt to honour?

Let thoſe who employ their whole time in reading our empty and ridiculous romances; let thoſe whoſe bad taſte can be pleaſed only with thoſe puerile thoughts, more falſe than delicate, with which we are daily ſtunned, diſdain the ſimple tribute of ſorrow that ſprings from the heart: let them nauſeate theſe true pictures of our grandeur and our loſſes, theſe ſincere eulogiums given to names and virtues unknown to them: I will nevertheleſs continue to ſtrew flowers on the tombs of our defenders, I will raiſe my feeble voice, and cry, Here was cut off, in the bloom of life, that young warrior*, whoſe

* The marquis de Beauveau, ſon to the prince of Craon.

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brothers fight under our ſtandards, and whoſe father protected the arts at Florence, under a foreign dominion. There was pierced with a mortal wound the marquis de Beauveau, his couſin, when the worthy grandſon of the great Condé forced the city of Ypres to ſurrender. Tormented with incredible pain, and ſurrounded by our ſoldiers, who diſputed with each other the honour of carrying him off, he ſaid to them in a dying voice, "My friends, go where your preſence is neceſſary; go and fight, and leave me to die by myſelf." Who can ſufficiently praiſe his frank and noble behaviour, his ſocial virtues, his knowledge, his love of learning, and that judicious ſkill in ancient monuments, which died with him? Thus periſhed by a violent death, and in the flower of their age, a number of men, from whom their country expected to derive the greateſt glory and advantage; while the uſeleſs incumbrances of the earth, grown old in lazineſs, amuſe themſelves in our gardens, and take a pleaſure in being the firſt to relate the news of theſe calamitous events.

O fate! O deſtiny! our days are numbered: the moment eternally fixed arrives, and annihilates all our projects, and all our hopes. The count de Biſſy, ready to receive the honours which are ſo greatly deſired, even by thoſe on whom honours are accumulated, runs from Genoa to Maeſtricht, and the laſt fire from the ramparts deprives him of life: he was the laſt victim that was ſacrificed, and fell at the very moment which heaven had preſcribed to put an end to ſo much bloodſhed. O war! thou who haſt filled France with glory, and with ſorrow,

thou doſt not barely ſtrike by thoſe ſudden blows which bring deſtruction in a moment! How many citizens, how many of our friends and relations, have been raviſhed from us by a ſlow death, occaſioned by the fatigue of long marches, and the ſeverity of the ſeaſons!

Thou art now no more, O ſweet hope of the reſt of my days! O my tender friend, educated in the king's invincible regiment, which hath always been conducted by heroes, which ſignalized itſelf ſo remarkably in the trenches of Prague, in the battle of Fontenoy, and in that of Lawfelt, where it decided the victory! The retreat from Prague, for the ſpace of thirty leagues, and through roads covered with ice, caſt into thy boſom the ſeeds of death, which my ſad eyes afterwards ſaw unfolded: familiarized to the view of death, thou beheldeſt him approach with that indifference, which the ancient philoſophers endeavoured either to acquire or to aſſume. Racked with pains, both within and without, deprived of ſight, and every day loſing a part of thyſelf, nothing but the moſt extraordinary degree of virtue could have prevented thy being miſerable; and yet this virtue ſat ſo eaſily upon thee, that it ſeemed to coſt thee no trouble. I have always ſeen thee the moſt unfortunate and the moſt compoſed of mankind. The world would never have known the great loſs it has ſuſtained in thy death, had not a man, equally remarkable for his humanity and eloquence, compoſed thy eulogium, in a work conſecrated to friendſhip, and embelliſhed with charms of the moſt moving poetry. I am not ſurpriſed, that, amidſt the tumults of war, thou didſt cultivate the ſtudy of letters and

of wiſdom: theſe examples are not rare among us. If thoſe who had only the oſtentation of merit, could never impoſe upon thee; if thoſe, who, even in the tender intercourſe of friendſhip, are guided only by the motives of vanity, provoked thy indignation, there were nevertheleſs ſome noble and ingenuous minds which reſembled thine own. If the elevation of thy thoughts would not ſuffer thee to ſtoop to the peruſal of licentious performances, the tranſient delight of giddy youth, who are rather pleaſed with the ſubject than the execution; if thou deſpiſedſt that crowd of books, produced by bad taſte; if thoſe who only endeavour to be ſmart and witty, appeared to thee in ſuch a mean and contemptible light; thou poſſeſſedſt this ſolidity of judgment in common with thoſe who always maintain the cauſe of reaſon againſt that inundation of bad taſte, which ſeems to threaten us with a ſpeedy decay. But by what prodigy didſt thou acquire, at the age of twenty-five, the knowledge of true philoſophy, and the talent of true eloquence? How waſt thou able to ſoar ſo high, in an age of folly and trifling? And how did the ſimplicity of infant baſhfulneſs cover the depth and ſtrength of thy genius! I ſhall long remember, with ſorrow, the value of thy friendſhip, the charms of which I had hardly begun to taſte: it was not that vain friendſhip which ſprings from the participation of vain pleaſures, which vaniſhes with them, and of which we have always reaſon to repent; but it was that ſteady and rational friendſhip, which, of all the virtues, is the moſt uncommon. It was thy loſs that firſt put into my heart the deſign of paying ſome honour to the aſhes of ſo

many defenders of the ſtate, that I might likewiſe raiſe a monument to thine. My heart, filled with the remembrance of thee, naturally ſought for this conſolation, without foreſeeing to what uſe this diſcourſe might be deſtined, nor how it would be received by the malignity of mankind, who commonly, indeed, ſpare the dead; but ſometimes however inſult their aſhes, eſpecially when it can ſerve as a freſh pretext for tearing the living in pieces.

June 1, 1748.

N. B. The young man whoſe death is here ſo juſtly lamented, is M. de Vauvenargues, who was long a captain in the king's regiment. I know not whether I am miſtaken, but I imagine the reader will find, in the ſecond edition of his book, more than an hundred thoughts, which plainly ſhew him to have been a youth of the moſt amiable diſpoſition, deeply ſkilled in philoſophy, and intirely free from all ſpirit of party and faction.

The following maxims are ſubmitted to the conſideration of the judicious.

"We are more frequently deceived by reaſon than by nature."

* * *

"If the paſſions lead us oftener aſtray than the judgment, it is for the ſame reaſon that rulers commit more faults than private men."

* * *

"Great thoughts flow from the heart." (In this manner, without knowing it, he drew his own character.)

"The

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" The conſcience of the dying reproaches " his life."

✥ ✥ ✥

" Fortitude or timidity, at the hour of " death, depends on the laſt ſickneſs."

I would adviſe the reader to peruſe the following maxims with great care, and to endeavour to explain them.

" The thought of death deceives us; for it " makes us forget to live."

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" Of all kinds of philoſophy that is the moſt " falſe, which, under the pretence of freeing " men from the dominion of the paſſions, ad- " viſes them to live in a ſtate of liſtleſs indo- " lence."

✥ ✥ ✥

" We owe, perhaps, to the paſſions the " greateſt advantages of a mental nature."

✥ ✥ ✥

" What does not hurt the intereſts of ſo- " ciety, does not belong to the cognizance of " juſtice."

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" Whoever is more ſevere than the laws, is " a tyrant."

It is evident, methinks, from theſe few maxims, that we cannot ſay of him what one of the moſt amiable geniuſes of the preſent age hath ſaid of theſe party-philoſphers, of theſe

new ſtoics, who have impoſed their doctrines on the ignorant:

Ils ont eu l'art de bien connaître
L'homme qu'ils ont imaginé,
Mais il n'ont jamais deviné
Ce qu'il eſt, ni ce qu'il doit être.

They ſtudy'd and preſented man,
As their own brains had form'd the creature;
But all their art could never ſcan
The genuine workmanſhip of Nature.

I do not know that any of thoſe who have undertaken the inſtruction of mankind, have ever written any thing more ſenſible than his chapter on Natural and Moral Evil. I do not pretend to ſay, that every thing is equally good in this book; but, if my judgment is not warped by the influence of friendſhip, I hardly know any book that is more proper to form a well-diſpoſed and teachable mind. What further confirms me in the opinion of the excellence of this work, which M. de Vauvenargues has left behind him, is, that I have ſeen it deſpiſed by thoſe who love nothing but falſe wit and quaint expreſſions.

OF THE

DOCTRINE OF GENII.

THE doctrine of genii, judicial aſtrology, and magic, has filled the whole earth. Go back to the time of Zoroaſter, you will find the belief of genii eſtabliſhed. All antiquity is filled with aſtrologers and magicians. Theſe notions muſt, therefore, be founded in nature. We now affect to laugh at thoſe nations among whom ſuch ridiculous conceits prevailed; but had we been in their place, had we, like them, been beginning to cultivate the ſciences, we ſhould have acted exactly in the ſame manner. Let us ſuppoſe, for once, that we are men of genius, beginning to reaſon on our own being, and to make obſervations on the heavenly bodies: the earth is doubtleſs immoveable, and fixed in the center of the univerſe; the ſun and planets revolve only for it; the ſtars are made ſolely for our ſake; ſo that man is the grand object to which every other part of nature is ſubſervient. What now ſhall we make of all theſe globes, which are ſolely deſtined for our uſe, and of the immenſity of ſpace? It is very probable, that ſpace in general, and theſe globes in particular, are peopled with inhabitants; and ſince we are the favourites of nature, placed in the center of the world, and every thing is made for us, theſe beings muſt evidently be deſtined to watch over man.

The firſt who ſhould believe the thing to be barely poſſible, would ſoon find diſciples convinced that it actually was ſo. Men began by ſaying, there poſſibly may be genii, and no body ought to affirm the contrary; for where is the impoſſibility of the air and the planets being inhabited? They then went a ſtep farther, and ſaid, there are genii; and no one ſurely can prove that there are none. Soon after ſome ſages ſaw theſe genii, and no one had a right to ſay that they had not ſeen them: they had appeared to men of ſo much conſideration, and ſo worthy of credit, as to put the matter beyond all doubt. One had ſeen the genius of the empire, or of the city in which he was born; another had ſeen the genius of Mars, or that of Saturn; the genii of the four elements had appeared to ſeveral philoſophers; more than one ſage had ſeen his own genius: all this, at firſt, in dreams; but dreams were ſymbols of the truth.

They even knew the ſhape and figure of theſe genii. In order to reach our globe, they behoved to have wings; and wings they accordingly had. We know no beings but bodies; they therefore had bodies, but bodies more beautiful than ours, becauſe they were genii, and more light, becauſe they came from ſuch an immenſe diſtance. The ſages, who had the privilege of converſing with the genii, flattered others with the hopes of enjoying the ſame happineſs. What kind of a reception would they have given to a ſceptic, who ſhould have ſaid, I have never ſeen any genii, therefore there are none? They would have anſwered, You reaſon very ill. It does not follow,

low, from your ignorance of a thing, that it does not actually exiſt. There is no contradiction in the doctrine which teaches the nature of theſe aerial beings; nor is it impoſſible that they may pay us a viſit. They have appeared to our ſages; they will appear to us: you are not worthy to ſee genii.

Every thing on earth is a mixture of good and evil; there muſt, therefore, be good and evil genii. The Perſians had their *peris* and their *dives*; the Greeks their *dæmons* and *cacodæmons*; and the Latins their *bonos* and *malos genios*. The good genius was white; the evil genius black; except among the Negroes, where the caſe was perfectly inverted. Plato readily admitted a good and evil genius for every mortal. The evil genius of Brutus appeared to him, and foretold his death, before the battle of Philippi. Have we not been told ſo by the graveſt hiſtorians? And would Plutarch have been ſo raſh as to affirm this fact, had it not been well founded?

Conſider, likewiſe, what an inexhauſtible fund of feaſts, diverſions, merry tales, and witty ſayings, the creation of genii afforded,

* *Scit genius natale comes qui temperat aſtrum.*

† *Ipſe ſuos adſit genius viſurus honores,*
Cui decorent ſanctas florea ſerta comas.

There were male genii and female genii. Among the Romans, the genii of the ladies were called little Juno's. They had alſo the

* Horace. † Tibullus.

plea-

pleaſure of ſeeing their genius grow. In infancy, it was a kind of Cupid with wings; in the old age of the perſon whom it protected, it had a long beard; and ſometimes it was a ſerpent. There is ſtill preſerved at Rome a piece of marble, on which is ſeen a beautiful ſerpent, under a palm-tree, with two crowns appended to it. The inſcription runs, "To the genius of the Auguſtus's." This was the emblem of immortality.

What demonſtrative proof have we that the genii, which were univerſally admitted by ſo many learned nations, are no more than creaturet of the imagination? All that can be ſaid on the ſubject may be reduced to this: I have never ſeen a genius; none of my acquaintance have ſeen one: Brutus has not left it on record that his genius appeared to him before the battle: neither Newton, nor Locke, nor even the fanciful Deſcartes, no king, nor miniſter of ſtate, were ever ſuppoſed to have ſpoken to their genii: I do not therefore believe a thing of which there is not the leaſt proof. The thing is not impoſſible, I own; but the poſſibility of it is no proof of its reality. It is very poſſible, that there may be ſatyrs with little curled tails and goats feet: I will wait, however, till I ſee ſeveral of them, before I will believe their exiſtence; for ſhould I only happen to ſee one, I will not believe it.

Of ASTROLOGY.

ASTROLOGY reſts on a firmer foundation than the doctrine of genii: for though no body has ſeen either Farfadets or Lemures, or Dives or Peris, or dæmons or caco-dæmons, yet many people have ſeen aſtrological predictions verified. Let two aſtrologers be conſulted about the life of a child, or the nature of the weather; let the one ſay that the child will live to man's age, and the other that he will not; let the one foretel rain, and the other fair weather; it is evident that one of them muſt be a prophet.

The great misfortune of aſtrologers is, that the heavens are changed ſince the rules of their art were eſtabliſhed. The ſun, which was in Aries in the time of the Argonauts, is now in Taurus; and the aſtrologers, to the great detriment of their art, attribute to one ſign of the zodiac what evidently belongs to another. This however is no demonſtrative argument againſt the truth of aſtrology. The maſters of the art may be deceived; but it has not yet been demonſtrated that no ſuch art can exiſt.

There is no abſurdity in ſaying, Such a child was born at half-moon, in ſtormy weather, and at the riſing of ſuch a ſtar; his conſtitution has been weak, and his life ſhort and unhappy, the common lot of all thoſe who are born with a bad habit of body. On the other hand, this child was born at full-moon, the ſun ſhining in all his vigour, the weather fair, and at the riſing of ſuch a ſtar; his conſtitution has been good,

good, and his life long and happy. Had theſe obſervations been frequently repeated, and found to hold true, experience might, at the end of ſome thouſands of ages, have formed an art, the truth of which it would have been difficult to diſprove: we ſhould then have thought, and with ſome appearance of reaſon too, that men are like trees and herbs, which ſhould only be ſown and planted at certain ſeaſons. It would have ſignified nothing to have objected againſt the aſtrologers, that your ſon was born at a happy time, and yet died in the cradle. The aſtrologer would have replied, It frequently happens that trees periſh, though planted at a proper ſeaſon. I only anſwered for the ſtars; but could not anſwer for the faults of the conſtitution which you gave to your child. Aſtrology can only operate when no foreign cauſe intervenes to oppoſe the influence of the ſtars.

Nor would you have been more ſucceſsful in diſcrediting aſtrology, by ſaying, Of two children born at the ſame minute, the one became a king, the other no more than the church-warden of his pariſh. The aſtrologers would have eaſily defended themielves by ſhewing, that the peaſant made his fortune by becoming a church-warden, as well as the prince made his by becoming a king.

Should you alledge, that a robber, whom Sixtus Quintus cauſed to be hanged, was born at the ſame time with Sixtus Quintus himſelf, who, from a ſow-herd, became a pope; the aſtrologers would ſay, that they had miſtaken a few ſeconds in their calculations; for that it was impoſſible, according to the rules of art, that the ſame ſtar ſhould beſtow a mitre and a gal-

gallows. It is only, therefore, from an immenſe number of events having belied the predictions, that men have at laſt diſcovered the art to be fallacious and deceitful; but, before they were undeceived, they lived a long time in a ſtate of the blindeſt credulity.

One of the moſt famous mathematicians of Europe, named Stoffler, who flouriſhed in the fifteenth and ſixteenth centuries, and who laboured long in reforming the calendar which was propoſed to the council of Conſtance, foretold an univerſal deluge that was to happen in the year 1524. This deluge was to be in the month of February, and nothing could be more plauſible; for Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars, were then in conjunction in the ſign of Piſces. All the inhabitants of Europe, Aſia, and Africa, that heard the prediction, were ſtruck with conſternation. Every body expected the deluge, notwithſtanding the rain-bow. Several cotemporary authors relate, that the people inhabiting the maritime provinces of Germany made haſte to ſell their lands, at a low price, to ſuch as had more money and leſs credulity than themſelves. Every one provided himſelf with a boat, in imitation of Noah's Ark. A doctor of Toulouſe in particular, called Auriol, cauſed a large ark to be built for himſelf, his family, and his friends; and the ſame precautions were taken in ſeveral parts of Italy. At laſt the month of February arrived, and not a drop of rain fell: never was month more dry, nor were ever the aſtrologers more embarraſſed. But, notwithſtanding this diſappointment, they were neither diſcouraged nor neglected amongſt us. Moſt princes continued to conſult them.

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I have not the honour to be a prince: but the famous count de Boulainvilliers, and an Italian named Colonne, who had a great reputation at Paris, both foretold that I ſhould certainly die at thirty-two years of age. I have had the malice to deceive them already in near thirty years, for which I moſt humbly aſk their pardon.

OF MAGIC.

MAGIC is a ſcience ſtill more plauſible than either aſtrology, or the doctrine of genii. As ſoon as men began to think that they poſſeſſed a principle entirely diſtinct from matter, and that the ſoul exiſted after death, they aſſigned to this ſoul a body, thin, ſubtile, aerial, and reſembling that in which it was formerly lodged. Two reaſons, both of them extremely natural, introduced this opinion. The firſt is, that in all languages the ſoul was called ſpirit, breath, wind; and this ſpirit, this breath, and this wind, was ſomething very thin and refined. The ſecond is, that if the ſoul of a man did not retain a form ſimilar to what it poſſeſſed in life, it would have been impoſſible, after death, to diſtinguiſh the ſoul of one man from that of another. This ſoul, or ghoſt, which ſubſiſted ſeparate from the body, might eaſily ſhew itſelf on occaſion, might return to the places it once inhabited, viſit its friends and relations, ſpeak to them, and inſtruct them. In this there was

nothing

nothing contradictory. Whatever is, may appear.

Spirits might eaſily acquaint thoſe whom they came to viſit with the manner of raiſing them up; and they actually did ſo: the word *Abraxa*, pronounced with ſome ceremonies, called up the particular ghoſt to whom the perſon wanted to ſpeak. Suppoſe an Egyptian ſhould ſay to a philoſopher, "I am deſcended, in a direct line, from the magicians of Pharaoh, who changed their rods into ſerpents, and the waters of the Nile into blood. One of my anceſtors married the witch of Endor, who called up the ghoſt of Samuel at the deſire of king Saul: ſhe communicated the ſecret to her huſband, and he imparted it to his children. I poſſeſs this power by inheritance from my father and mother. My genealogy is well vouched; I command the ghoſts and the elements." The philoſopher could only beg his protection; for ſhould he take it in his head to deny and to diſpute, the magician would ſtop his mouth by ſaying, "You cannot deny facts. My anceſtors were certainly great magicians; of this you cannot entertain the leaſt doubt. You have no reaſon to think me inferior to them, eſpecially when a man of honour, as I am, aſſures you that he is a ſorcerer." The philoſopher might ſay, "Do me the favour to raiſe a ſpirit; give me an opportunity of ſpeaking to a ghoſt; change this water into blood, and this rod into a ſerpent." The magician might reply, "I do not work for philoſophers; I raiſe ſpirits to very reſpectable ladies, and to ſimple people who do not diſpute; you ought to believe that it is poſſible, at leaſt, that I may poſſeſs this ſecret, ſince you are forced

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to acknowledge that my anceſtors poſſeſſed it: what has been done formerly may be done now; and you ought to believe the reality of magic without obliging me to give a ſpecimen of my art."

Theſe reaſons are ſo good, that all nations have had their ſorcerers. The greateſt ſorcerers were paid by the ſtate, for diſcovering future events from the heart and liver of an ox. Why then have the reſt been ſo long capitally puniſhed? But they performed ſtill greater wonders; we ought therefore to honour them, and to ſtand in awe of their power. Nothing is more ridiculous than to condemn a true magician to the flames; for it is to be preſumed that he can extinguiſh the fire, and break the necks of his judges. All that can be done is to ſay to him, "We do not burn you, friend, as a true ſorcerer, but as a falſe one, who vainly boaſt yourſelf the maſter of an admirable art, which you do not underſtand: we treat you as we would treat a man that circulates baſe money: the more we value the genuine coin, the more ſeverely do we puniſh thoſe who give counterfeit money. We know there have been venerable magicians in former ages; but we have reaſon to think that you are not of that number, ſince you ſuffer yourſelf to be burned like a fool."

It is true, the magician, when driven to extremity, may ſay, "My art does not extend ſo far as to enable me to extinguiſh fire without water, nor to kill my judges with a word. I can only raiſe ſpirits, look into futurity, and change certain bodies into others of a different form. My power is limited; but you ought not on that account to burn me by a ſlow fire,

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This is as unreaſonable as if you ſhould hang a phyſician who has cured you of a fever, becauſe he is not likewiſe able to cure you of a palſy." But the judges would anſwer, "Shew us then ſome ſpecimen of your art, or chearfully conſent to be committed to the flames."

Of People poſſeſſed by Evil Spirits.

THOSE who are poſſeſſed of evil ſpirits are the only people to whom it is impoſſible to give any good anſwer. Let a man but once ſay, "I am poſſeſſed by an unclean ſpirit," and we muſt believe him on his word. Nor is he obliged, in proof of his aſſertion, to perform extraordinary actions: if he does perform ſuch actions, it is only from a ſuperabundance of right. What can you ſay to a man who rolls his eyes, diſtorts his mouth, and affirms that he has the devil in him? Every one is the beſt judge of his own feelings. Formerly every place was full of people poſſeſſed with unclean ſpirits, and ſome of them may be met with. If they take it in their head to beat people, they are preſently repaid in their own coin, and then they become very quiet and peaceable. But with regard to a poor wretch of this character, who contents himſelf with a few convulſions, and does harm to no body, we have no right to do any harm to him. Should you argue with him, he will be ſure to get the better of you. He will ſay, "The devil entered into me yeſterday, under ſuch a form, and I have, ever ſince, been troubled with a ſuper-

a ſupernatural cholic, which all the apothecaries in the world cannot cure" It is evident that the only courſe we can take with ſuch a man is to exorciſe him, or to abandon him to the devil.

The want of magicians, aſtrologers, genii, and of people poſſeſſed by unclean ſpirits, is a great loſs in the preſent age. 'Tis impoſſible to conceive, of what infinite uſe theſe myſteries were about a hundred years ago. All the nobility then lived in caſtles, and, in the long winter evenings, they would have died with wearineſs, had it not been for theſe noble amuſements. There was hardly a caſtle to which a fairy did not return on certain ſtated days; as, for inſtance, the fairy Merluſine to the caſtle of Luſignan. The chief huntſman, a man of a meagre habit, and black complexion, hunted with a pack of black dogs in the foreſt of Fontainbleau. The devil broke the neck of mareſchal Fabert. Every village had its ſorcerer, or its ſorcereſs. Every prince had his aſtrologer. All the ladies had their fortunes told. The perſons poſſeſſed by evil ſpirits ran up and down the country; and he was the prettieſt fellow who had ſeen the devil, or could ſee him the ſooneſt. All this was an inexhauſtible fund of converſation, and kept the minds of people in exerciſe. At preſent we divert ourſelves with the inſipid game of cards, and have entirely loſt the pleaſure of being deceived.

OF OVID.

THE learned have written whole volumes to inform us to what corner of the earth Ovidius Naſo was baniſhed by Octavius Cepias, ſurnamed Auguſtus. All that we know of him is, that he was born at Sulmona, educated at Rome, and lived ten years on the right-hand bank of the Danube, not far from the Black Sea. Though he calls this a barbarous country, we are not therefore to imagine that it was inhabited by ſavages. The natives compoſed verſes Cotis, a petty king of a part of Thrace, wrote ſome Getic verſes for Ovid. The Latin poet learned the Getic, and compoſed ſeveral verſes in that language. One would have expected to find ſome Greek verſes in the ancient country of Orpheus; but this ſpot was then inhabited by a northern nation, who probably ſpoke a Tartarian dialect; a language nearly a-kin to the ancient Sclavonic. Ovid did not ſeem to be formed for writing Tartarian verſes. The country of the Tomites, to which he was baniſhed, was part of Meſia, a Roman province between Mount Hemus and the Danube. It is ſituated in the latitude of forty-four degrees and a half, like the fineſt provinces of France; but the mountains which lie to the ſouth, the northerly and eaſterly winds that blow from the Euxine Sea, and the cold and dampneſs of the ſoil, occaſioned by the foreſts and the Danube, rendered this country inſupportable to a native of Italy: and hence it was, that Ovid lived but a ſhort time in it, having died there at ſixty years of age. In his elegies

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he complains of the climate, and not of the inhabitants:

Quos ego, cùm loca ſim veſtra peroſus, amo.
Whom, tho' I hate your ſoil, I dearly love.

Theſe people crowned him with laurels, and gave him many privileges, which, however, could not hinder him from regretting the loſs of Rome. Nothing could be a ſtronger proof of the ſlavery of the Romans, and of the utter extinction of all their laws, than for a man born in an equeſtrian family, as Octavius was, to baniſh a perſon of the ſame rank, and for one citizen of Rome to ſend another among the Scythians by a ſingle word. Before that time, it required a plebiſcitum, a law made by the whole nation, to deprive a Roman of his native country. Cicero, though baniſhed by a cabal, was nevertheleſs baniſhed with all the laws preſcribed by the laws.

It is evident that Ovid's crime was his having ſeen ſomething ſhameful in the family of Octavius.

Cur aliquid vidi, cur noxia lumina feci?
Why did my eyes the guilty ſcene behold?

It is ſtill a doubt among the learned, whether he had ſeen Auguſtus with a young boy, more plump and jolly than that Mannius whom Auguſtus ſaid he could not like becauſe he was too lean; or if he had ſeen ſome gentleman-uſher in the arms of the empreſs Livia, whom Auguſtus married while ſhe was with child by another; or if he had ſeen the emperor toying with his daughter, or his grand-daughter; or, finally, whether

whether he had ſeen Auguſtus doing ſomething ſtill worſe, *torva tuentibus hircis*. It is extremely probable that Ovid ſurpriſed Auguſtus in the commiſſion of inceſt. An author, almoſt cotemporary with Ovid, called Minutianus Apuleius, ſays, *Pulſum quoque in exilium quod Auguſti inceſtum vidiſſet*.

Octavius Auguſtus made the harmleſs book of "The Art of Love," a book written with great decency, and in which there is not one obſcene word, a pretext for baniſhing a Roman knight to the coaſts of the Black Sea. This pretext was ridiculous. How could Auguſtus, who has left behind him ſome verſes filled with the moſt filthy obſcenity; how could he, with any regard to decency, baniſh Ovid to Tomis, for having ſeveral years before given his friends a few copies of "The Art of Love?" How could he have the impudence to blame Ovid for a work, written with ſome modeſty at leaſt, at the very time that he approved the verſes of Horace, in which that authors ſcatters, with an unſparing hand, all the terms of the moſt infamous proſtitution, ſuch as *futuo*, and *mentula*, and *cunnus?* He propoſes to gratify his paſſion, either with a laſcivious wench, or with a pretty boy who ties up his long hair in a knot, or with a ſervant maid, or with a lacquey, and all without the leaſt diſtinction; for to him every one is equal. In a word, he is free from no kind of lewdneſs, but that of beſtiality. Is it not then the height of impudence to find fault with Ovid, and yet to tolerate Horace? It is evident that *Octavius* alledges a very bad reaſon for his conduct, not daring to mention the true one. Another proof that Ovid's baniſhment was owing to ſome act

of fornication or inceſt, or to ſome ſecret adventure or other of the ſacred imperial family, is, that that buck of Caprea, Tiberius, immortalized by the medals of his debaucheries, and a monſter of lewdneſs as well as of diſſimulation, did not recal the poet. It was in vain for Ovid to aſk a pardon from the author of the proſcriptions, and the poiſoner of Germanicus: he was obliged to remain on the banks of the Danube.

Had a Dutch, a Poliſh, a Swediſh, an Engliſh, or a Venetian gentleman ſeen a ſtadtholder, a king of Great Britain, a king of Sweden, a king of Poland, or a doge, commit ſome groſs ſin; had this gentleman ſeen the commiſſion of the crime, not merely by accident, but had actually ſought for an opportunity of ſeeing it; and, in fine, had he been even ſo imprudent as to talk of it in public; yet neither the ſtadtholder, nor the king, nor the doge, would have a right to baniſh him.

But we have almoſt as much reaſon to blame Ovid for having praiſed Auguſtus and Tiberius, as we have to blame them for the crimes they committed. The eulogiums he beſtows upon them are ſo extravagant, that they would even excite our indignation had they been giveu to princes, who were at once lawful ſovereigns and his benefactors; but he gives them to tyrants, and to his tyrants. We can excuſe a man for beſtowing a few praiſes on a prince that careſſes him; but we can by no means excuſe him for deifying a prince that perſecutes him. He would have done much better to have embarked on the Black Sea, and retired into Perſia through the Palus Meotis, than to have compoſed his *Triſtia de Ponto*. He would have learned the Perſian

Perſian as eaſily as the Getic, and might, at leaſt, have forgot the maſter of Rome for the maſter of Ecbatan. Some ſtupid objector may, perhaps, alledge that he had ſtill one courſe to take; namely, to go privately to Rome; to apply to the relations of Brutus and Caſſius, and to form a twelfth conſpiracy againſt Octavius; but that was not in the elegiac taſte.

What a ſtrange and inconſiſtent thing is praiſe! Ovid, it is plain, heartily wiſhes that ſome Brutus would deliver Rome from her Auguſtus, and yet, in his verſes, he wiſhes him immortality.

I blame Ovid for nothing but his Triſtia. Bayle attacks him upon his philoſophy of the Chaos, which is ſo well explained in the beginning of his Metamorphoſes:

Ante mare, & terras, & quod tegit omnia cælum,
Unus erat toto naturæ vultus in orbe.

Bayle tranſlates theſe verſes thus: "Before the heaven, the earth, or the ſea exiſted, all nature was one homogeneous maſs." Ovid ſays, "the face of nature was every where the ſame." This does not mean that all was one homogeneous maſs; but only that this heterogeneous maſs, this aſſemblage of different things, appeared to be the ſame; *unus vultus.*

Bayle criticiſes the whole of the chaos. Ovid, who, in his verſes, is no more than the chanter of the ancient philoſophy, ſays, that things ſoft and hard, light and heavy, were mixed together:

Mollia cum duris, ſine pondere habentia pondus:

and Bayle reaſons againſt him in the following manner:

"Nothing can be more abſurd than to ſuppoſe a chaos, that was homogeneous from eternity, though it had the elementary properties, as well thoſe which are called alterative, ſuch as heat, cold, moiſture, dryneſs, as thoſe which are called motive, and which are gravity and lightneſs; the latter the cauſe of an upward motion, the former of a downward. Such matter as this could not poſſibly be homogeneous, but muſt neceſſarily contain all ſorts of heterogeneous qualities. Heat, cold, moiſture, and dryneſs could not exiſt together, without being modified by their action and reaction, and converted into other properties which compoſe the form of mixed bodies; and as this modification might be made according to the innumerable diverſities of combinations, the chaos muſt have contained an incredible multitude of mixed bodies of different forms. The only way in which we can conceive the chaos to be homogeneal, would be to ſay, that the alterative properties of the elements were modified exactly in the ſame degree in all particles of matter, ſo that there was every-where the ſame medium between heat and cold, the ſame ſoftneſs, the ſame ſmell, the ſame taſte, &c. But this would be to pull down with one hand what we had built with the other; this would be, by a contradiction in terms, to give the name of a Chaos to a work of the greateſt regularity, ſymmetry, and proportion that can poſſibly be conceived. I own, indeed, that the human mind is better pleaſed with a diverſified, than with an uniform work; but we muſt be convinced, on ſerious reflexion, that the harmony of contrary qualities uniformly preſerved throughout the univerſe,

verſe, would be as great a perfection as that unequal diſtribution which ſucceeded the chaos.

"What unlimited knowledge, what unbounded power would be requiſite to preſerve this uniform harmony diffuſed through all nature? It would not be ſufficient to put into the compoſition of every mixed body the ſame quantity of each of the four ingredients; it would be neceſſary to put more of ſome, and leſs of others, according to their greater or leſs aptitude to act than to reſiſt; for it is well known that the philoſophers make a great diſtinction between action and reaction on the elementary qualities. All things conſidered, it will be found, that the cauſe that ſhould have metamorphoſed the chaos, would have drawn it, not from a ſtate of war and confuſion, as is commonly ſuppoſed, but from a ſtate of the greateſt order and regularity, which, by reducing the contrary forces to an equilibrium, preſerved it in perfect peace and tranquility. Hence it is evident, that if the poets will ſtill maintain the homogeneity of the chaos, they muſt, of courſe, deſtroy all that they have added about this ſtrange jumble of contrary ingredients, this indigeſted maſs, this eternal war of jarring principles.

"But not to inſiſt on this contradiction, we ſhall find ſufficient reaſon to attack them on other accounts. Let us begin with the notion of eternity. Can any thing be more abſurd than to admit a mixture of the inſenſible parts of the four elements for an infinite time? The moment you ſuppoſe theſe parts poſſeſſed of the activity of heat, the moment you allow the action and reaction of the four primary qualities, the centripetal motion in the particles of the earth and

water, and the centrifugal motion in thoſe of fire and the air, you eſtabliſh a principle which will neceſſarily ſeparate theſe four ſorts of bodies, and will require for this purpoſe but a limited time. Conſider a little what is called the phial of the four elements. Put into it ſome ſmall metallic particles, and then three different liquors, every one lighter than the others: ſhake it all together, you no longer diſcern any of theſe four mixtures; the parts of each of them are confounded with the parts of the others. But let your phial ſtand a little, and you will then find each of them reſume its proper ſituation. All the metallic particles fall to the bottom of the phial; thoſe of the lighteſt liquor mount to the top; thoſe of the liquor, which is heavier than that, but lighter than the other, occupy the third ſtage; and thoſe of the liquor, which is heavier than the othet two, but lighter than the metallic particles, ſettle in the ſecond place; and thus you will find the diſtinct ſituations which you had confounded by ſhaking the phial. Nor will ſuch an experiment require much patience: a very ſhort time will be ſufficient to make it; and will exhibit a true picture of the ſituation which nature has given to the four elements in the conſtruction of the world. Thus, by comparing the univerſe to this phial, we may eaſily conclude, that were the earth reduced to powder, and were that powder mixed with the matter of the ſtars, and with that of the air and water, and were that mixture to extend even to the inviſible particles of each of theſe elements, every thing would immediately begin to diſintangle itſelf, and, at the end of a certain time, the parts of the earth would form one maſs, thoſe of fire

another,

another, and ſo of the reſt, according to the gravity or lightneſs of each kind of body."

But I would take the liberty of telling M. Bayle, that the experiment of the phial could not be made at the time of the chaos. I would tell him that Ovid and the philoſophers underſtood by heavy and light things, ſuch as became ſo when God put his hand to them. I would ſay to him; You ſuppoſe that nature might, by its own virtue, have put itſelf into its preſent form, and beſtowed upon itſelf the quality of gravity: but you muſt firſt prove that gravity is a property eſſentially inherent in matter; a thing which, to this day, has never yet been demonſtrated. Deſcartes pretends, in his philoſophical romance, that bodies did not become heavy till her vortices of ſubtile matter began to puſh them to a center. Newton, in his true philoſophy, does not ſay that gravitation or attraction is a property eſſential to matter. Had Ovid been able to gueſs at the nature of Newton's Principia Mathematica, he would have ſaid, Matter was neither heavy, nor in motion in my chaos: it was neceſſary that God ſhould give it theſe two qualities: my chaos did not poſſeſs the properties you aſcribe to it: "*Nec quidquam niſi pondus iners*," it was only an inactive maſs; *pondus* here ſignifying maſs, and not weight. Nothing could be heavy till God had impreſſed on matter the principle of gravitation. How could one body tend towards the center of another, be attracted by it, or puſh it, unleſs the ſupreme artiſt had given it that inexplicable virtue? Thus Ovid would be found to be not only a good philoſopher, but even a tolerable divine.

You ſay, "A ſcholaſtic divine would readily

admit, that if the four elements exiſted independent of God, with all the properties they now poſſeſs, they might of themſelves have formed the world, and maintained it in its preſent ſtate. We muſt therefore acknowledge that there are two capital errors in the doctrine of the chaos. The firſt and principal error is, that it deprives God of the honour of creating matter, and of producing the properties that are peculiar to the fire, to the air, the earth, and the ſea. The ſecond is, that, after having robbed him of this prerogative, it introduces him on the theatre of the world without any apparent neceſſity, merely to aſſign proper places to the four elements. The new philoſophers, who reject the qualities and properties of the peripatetic phyſics, would find the ſame errors in Ovid's deſcription of the chaos; for what they call the general laws of motion, mechanical principles, and modifications of matter, ſuch as figure, ſituation, and arrangement of ſmall bodies, mean no more than that active and paſſive virtue of nature, which the peripatetics expreſs by the words, alterative and motive properties of the four elements. Since, therefore, agreeable to their doctrine, theſe four bodies, ſituated according to their natural gravity and lightneſs, are a principle ſufficient to anſwer all manner of productions, the Carteſians, the Gaſſendiſts, and other modern philoſophers, muſt allow that the motion, the ſituation, and the configuration of the parts of matter are ſufficient for the production of all natural effects, not even excepting the general arrangement which put the earth, the air, the water, and the ſtars into the condition in which we now behold them. Thus the true cauſe of the world,

world, and of all the effects produced in it, is the ſame with that which gave motion to the parts of matter, whether it was by aſſigning to every atom a certain figure, according to the opinion of the Gaſſendiſts, or only by giving to parts perfectly cubical an impulſe, which, by the duration of motion reduced to fixed laws, might make them aſſume, in the ſequel, all ſorts of figures. This is the hypotheſis of the Carteſians. But both of them muſt allow, as a neceſſary conſequence, that if matter was ſuch as Ovid has ſuppoſed it to be before the creation of the world, it would have been able, by its own inherent properties, to draw itſelf from the chaos, and to form the world without tne aſſiſtance of God. They ought therefore to accuſe Ovid of having committed two blunders. The one is, his ſuppoſing that matter had, without the aid of the Deity, the ſeeds of all mixed bodies, as heat, motion, &c. the other is, his ſaying, that, without the aſſiſtance of God, it never could have drawn itſelf from a ſtate of confuſion. This is to aſcribe too much and too little both to the one and the other; it is to diſpenſe with aſſiſtance in the greateſt difficulty, and to aſk it when it is not neceſſary."

But Ovid might ſtill reply, You falſly ſuppoſe my elements to have had all the qualities which they now poſſeſs; whereas, in fact, they had none of them: they were a naked, ſhapeleſs, and inactive maſs; and when I ſaid that in my chaos cold was mixed with heat, and moiſture with dryneſs, I could not make uſe of any other expreſſions than theſe, which only mean, that there was neither cold, nor heat, nor moiſture, nor dryneſs. Theſe are qualities which God hath placed

in our ſenſations, and which have no exiſtence in matter. I have not committed the blunders of which you accuſe me. It is your Carteſians, and your Gaſſendiſts that commit blunders with their atoms, and their cubic parts; and their whimſical conceits are as ill-founded as my Metamorphoſes. I prefer a Daphne changed into a laurel, and a Narciſſus transformed into a flower, to your ſubtile matter changed into ſuns, and your groſſer matter formed into earth and water.

I gave you fables as fables, and you philoſophers give us fables for realities.

Of SOCRATES.

IS the mould broken in which thoſe illuſtrious perſons were formed, who loved virtue for her own ſake, a Confucius, a Pythagoras, a Thales, a Socrates? In their times there were crowds of devotees who worſhipped their pagods and their deities; people ſtruck with the fear of Cerberus; and enthuſiaſts that ran through the whole circle of initiations, pilgrimages, myſteries, and who ruined themſelves by their expenſive offerings of black ſheep. All ages have ſeen ſuch unhappy wretches as Lucretius mentions:

Qui quocumque tamen miſeri venêre, parentant,
Et nigras mactant pecudes & manibus divis
In ferias mittunt, multoque in rebus acerbis
Acrius advertunt animos ad religionem.

Nay, more; where'er theſe boaſting wretches come
They ſacrifice black ſheep on every tomb
To pleaſe the Manes; and of all the rout,
When cares and dangers preſs, grow moſt devout.

Mortifications were then in uſe. The prieſts of Cybele cauſed themſelves to be caſtrated, in order to preſerve their chaſtity. Whence comes it, that, among all theſe martyrs of ſuperſtition, antiquity cannot ſhew us a ſingle ſage, or great man? The reaſon is, that fear could never produce virtue. The great men were always admirers of moral good. Wiſdom was their ruling paſſion: they were ſages for the ſame reaſon that Alexander was a warrior, Homer a poet, and Apelles a painter, by the mere force and impulſe of nature; and this, perhaps, is all that we ought to underſtand by the demon of Socrates.

As two citizens of Athens were, one day, returning from the temple of Mercury, they obſerved Socrates in the ſtreet. "Is not that the impious wretch," ſaid the one, "who pretends that men may be virtuous without going daily to offer ſheep and geeſe? "Yes," replied the other, "that is the Sage, who has no religion; that is the Atheiſt, who ſays that there is but one God." Socrates approached them with his uſual air of ſimplicity, his demon, and his ironical vein of humour, which Madam Dacier has ſo much improved: "Friends, ſaid he, a word with you, if you pleaſe: what name would you give to a man that prays to the Deity, and adores him, endeavours to reſemble him as much as the weakneſs of human nature will permit, and does all the good in his power? "He is," ſaid they, "a very religious man." "Well. May not a man adore the Supreme Being, and yet have a due ſenſe of religion?" "Agreed," ſaid the two Athenians. "But think ye," continued Socrates, "that when the Divine Architect of the world arranged all theſe globes that roll above our heads, and gave life and motion to ſo many different beings; think ye that he made uſe of the arm of Hercules, the lyre of Apollo, or the flute of Pan?" "It is not probable," ſaid they. "But if it is improbable that he employed the aſſiſtance of any one in conſtructing all theſe bodies we ſee around us, it is equally improbable that he employs the miniſtration of any one to preſerve them in being. Were Neptune abſolute maſter of the ſea, Juno of the air, Æolus of the winds, and Ceres of harveſts; and ſhould one of them deſire a calm, and another wind and rain, you plainly perceive that the order of nature

ture could not ſubſiſt in its preſent ſtate. It is neceſſary, you will allow, that every thing ſhould depend on the author of its being. You give four white horſes to the ſun, and two black ones to the moon; but is it not better that day and night ſhould be the effect of that motion which was impreſſed on the ſtars by the Creator of theſe heavenly bodies, than that they ſhould be produced by ſix horſes?" The two citizens looked at each other, without making any anſwer. Socrates concluded his diſcourſe, by proving, that they might have plentiful crops without giving money to the prieſts of Ceres; might go a-hunting without preſenting little ſtatues of ſilver to the temple of Diana; that Pomona was not the giver of fruits, nor Neptune of horſes; but that we ought to return our thanks to the Supreme Being who made all things.

His diſcourſe was conducted according to the ſtricteſt rules of logic. Xenophon, his diſciple, a man who knew the world, and who afterwards ſacrificed to the Wind in the retreat of the ten thouſand, pulled Socrates by the ſleeve, and ſaid; "Your diſcourſe is admirable; you have ſpoken better than an oracle; but you have ruined yourſelf: one of theſe men is a butcher, who ſells ſheep and geeſe for the ſacrifices; and the other is a goldſmith, who gains great ſums by making little gods of ſilver and copper for the ladies. They will accuſe you of impiety for having endeavoured to leſſen their profits. They will ſwear againſt you before Melitus and Anitus, your enemies, who have conſpired your ruin. Take care of the hemlock. Your demon ſhould have diſſuaded you from ſaying to a butcher and a gold-

a goldſmith, what ought only to be ſaid to a Plato or a Xenophon.

Some time after, Socrates's enemies found means to have him condemned by the council of five hundred. He had two hundred and twenty votes in his favour. This makes it probable, that there were two hundred and twenty philoſophers in the aſſembly; but ſhews, at the ſame time, that in every company, the number of philoſophers is the ſmalleſt.

Socrates, accordingly, drank the hemlock for having ſpoken in favour of the Unity of God; and the Athenians afterwards dedicated a temple to Socrates, that very man who had declaimed againſt the practice of dedicating temples to inferior beings.

EXAMINATION

OF THE

POLITICAL TESTAMENT

OF

CARDINAL ALBERONI.

AFTER ſo many teſtaments which the public have rendered void and ineffectual, that of cardinal Alberoni, at laſt, makes its appearance. I heartily wiſh that the cardinal had given the editor a place in his teſtament. This editor or author muſt, doubtleſs, know the world too well, not to be ſenſible, that a good legacy, which makes a man live in eaſe and affluence, is better than a thouſand political ſpeculations. A writer compoſes a fine book, full of the moſt profound reaſoning, on the ruinous commerce of Europe with the Eaſt Indies: a merchant, with a ſtroke of his pen, ſends a commiſſion thither, without reaſoning about effects; gains an immenſe fortune; and does not read the book. The caſe is the ſame in politics: a man of genius and leiſure forms projects to change the face of Europe: thoſe who govern, follow their old track, without ſo much as enquiring whether any projects have ever been formed.

The abbé de Bourzey, afraid that he ſhould not be read, boldly aſſumed the name of the cardinal de Richlieu. Others have taken the names

names of Mazarin, of Colbert, of Louvois, and of the duke of Lorrain. All theſe teſtaments are compoſed in the ſtile of Criſpin's, who takes the night-gown and the name of Geronte in the Univerſal Legatee. It is evident, at firſt ſight, that Geronte is not the author of that teſtament; we ſoon diſcover it to be the work of Criſpin.

It muſt be owned, indeed, that the Teſtament of cardinal Alberoni is not compoſed by a Criſpin: it is written by a man of no inconſiderable ſhare of knowledge; but he muſt not pretend to make the world believe, that this teſtament is really the work of the cardinal. In vain does he endeavour in his preface to elude the law which I enforced, viz. that this ſingle word, "The Teſtament of a Miniſter," lays the author under an indiſpenſable obligation to depoſite the original of the work in the public archives, or to prove the authenticity of it in ſome other way, equally ſatisfactory.

If this law is violated, the public have a right to exclaim againſt the impoſition. In matters of ſo great importance we are bound to convince the world that we act fairly and honeſtly. When I printed the Anti-Machiavel at the Hague, I depoſited the original copy in the Town-houſe, where it ſtill remains. The author, indeed, does not pretend, that the Teſtament of cardinal Alberoni is the work of that miniſter; he only ſays, that it contains his intentions; that it is a collection of ſome of the cardinal's thoughts, to which the editor has joined his own; by which means the work may become doubly valuable. Call it a Teſtament, or not, as you pleaſe, it is of no conſequence. The titles of books are like

thoſe

thoſe of men in the eyes of a philoſopher; he judges of nothing by titles.

Be it the cardinal Alberoni, or his interpreter, that adviſes the king of Spain to encourage agriculture, it is certainly a very good advice, and his majeſty ought to follow it, whether it come from a miniſter, or a farmer. The author propoſes to cultivate the lands in Spain by the hands of the negroes. And why not? Theſe lands, which want labourers, ſtill accuſe that unhappy king, who deprived them of the hands of the Moors, under whom they were fertile. The deſerts of Pruſſia, cultivated by foreigners, are a reproach to the lands of Caſtile.

Few men are better acquainted with Spain than this author. One would almoſt take him for the miniſter of Philip V. or for him who was the companion of his retreat and his unhappy friend (if indeed one can be the friend of a king.) He enumerates all the cauſes to which the depopulation of Spain is owing; but, methinks, he is in the wrong, not to reckon among theſe cauſes the expulſion of the Jews and the Moors, and the many colonies tranſplanted into America. The emigration of the Proteſtants from France is hardly perceptible. But the reaſon is, that France contains about twenty-two millions of induſtrious inhabitants; whereas, in Spain there are ſcarcely above ſix millions of people, and their pride and lazineſs jointly contribute to ſtifle the ſpirit of induſtry. Take much from him that has little, and what remains? how repair theſe loſſes in a country where parents tranſmit to their children the diſeaſe that attacks the human ſpecies in its ſource, and where ſuperſtition buries nature in cloiſters? I here make uſe of the term

term Superſtition, which the cardinal employs; for I would not willingly change his words. The author plainly proves that Spain is the country of grandeur and abuſes. He does more: he points out the remedies. The work has not been reviewed by the inquiſitors. There are ſome countries in the world which require, that a man ſhould be ſix hundred miles from them, before he can take the liberty of telling theſe uſeful truths.

In the ſeventh chapter we ſee a part of that immenſe plan, which was formerly conceived by cardinal Alberoni. This man, in 1707, was not known in Anet (the curacy of which he refuſed) by any other character, than that of "*uomo faceto è piacevole*," who made excellent onion-ſoops. He was then patronized by Campiſtron; and in 1718 he was going to turn the world topſy-turvy. I made mention of him in my hiſtory of Charles XII. I there did him juſtice; and he returned me thanks with ſo much the more gratitude, as he was then unfortunate. This project, which was juſt upon the point of being carried into execution, was to arm the Ottoman empire againſt Auſtria, and Charles XII. and the Czar againſt England; to eſtabliſh the Pretender on the throne of Great-Britain: to deprive the duke of Orleans of the regency of France; and to render Italy for ever independent of Germany, after ſeven hundred years of ſubjection, or ſlavery, or ſubmiſſion. In proſecution of this ſcheme, an Italian body was formed ſomewhat reſembling the Germanic body. Don Carlos was to have Naples and Sicily; and his brother, Don Philip, Tuſcany. Lombardy was to fall to the ſhare of the dukes of Savoy. Mantua was to be added to the territories of Venice; and

the dominions of the duke of Modena were to be more than doubled by the addition of Parma.

Views of the moſt extenſive commerce came in aid of theſe political regulations or diſorders. The cannon-ball which killed Charles XII. overturned the whole project. But this ſhattered machine was ſtrong enough, ſome time after, to place Don Carlos on the throne of the two Sicilies by new expedients.

The author would have the Pretender to endeavour to obtain the ſovereignty of Corſica, inſtead of making fruitleſs attempts upon the crown of England. He then propoſes to him the viceroyalty of Majorca. Can theſe propoſals come from the cardinal Alberoni?

Can it poſſibly be he who inveighs ſo bitterly againſt the memory of the cardinal de Fleury; and who ſays, that nothing was to be heard but the complaints and groans of the people during the adminiſtration of that miniſter? If it really be the cardinal Alberoni that ſpeaks thus, he is either greatly prejudiced, or he is not ſo well acquainted with France as with Spain. He decries the cardinal de Fleury in every thing, and degrades him below mediocrity. But when we travel from St. Dizier to Moyenvic, we ſay, "It was the cardinal de Fleury that added all theſe territories to France; and what more could a great man have then done?" The cardinal Alberoni is become a very ſevere cenſurer ſince his death. His Teſtament is a ſatire.

He blames cardinal Fleury for having been for the war of 1741, though it is well known that he was againſt it, and oppoſed it with all his might.

He

He blames the emperor Charles VI. for having made his pragmatic ſanction; but the daughter of that emperor, we believe, will be of a different opinion. He is for changing the conſtitution of Germany. In a word, he acts like a man who has loſt his eſtate at play, and ſtill taking pleaſure in viewing the players, publiſhes aloud the miſtakes he thinks he diſcovers.

Can it poſſibly be the cardinal Alberoni, that thus judges the living and the dead? We know a marechal of France, who has acquired a great reputation by his grand projects, by the ſpirit of order and œconomy which he introduced, and by his genius and activity. The pretended teſtator treats him very ſeverely. In my opinion, hiſtory ought not to ſpeak of the living: ſhe ought to imitate the judgments of the Egyptians, who never decided concerning the merit of their countrymen, until they were no more. The characters of great men are always viewed in a falſe light during their life-time. But had we an inclination to anſwer the bitter reproaches with which cardinal Alberoni loads this illuſtrious Frenchman, we might ſay: Ceaſe to reproach the marechal with exhauſting the treaſures of France, in his magnificent embaſſy to Frankfort, when Charles XII. was choſen emperor. Ceaſe to repreſent Germany as jealous of this pretended profuſion. The Spaniſh ambaſſador made as great a figure there as the ambaſſador of France. The duke de Ripperda had appeared at Vienna with ſtill greater ſplendor; nor was it ever known that any nation was alarmed at the number of a plenipotentiary's domeſtics, or at the richneſs and magnificence of his plate. You was certainly indiſpoſed when you wrote this article; and you beſtowed

beſtowed your malediction, at your dying hour, on a mere trifle. Your eminence was in a bad humour, when you dictated the article in which you condemn in a political view, the project of this general; you ought not to judge by the event. Men whoſe reputation with poſterity will be higher than yours, becauſe with an equal ſhare of genius they had better fortune, have ſaid, that the plan which you think ſo chimerical, was of all others the moſt likely to ſucceed. In effect, what was this plan? It was to unite France, Spain, Pruſſia, Saxony, and Bavaria, to judge ſword in hand, the cauſe of the ſucceſſion to the Auſtrian dominions. A young and victorous king had an army of an hundred thouſand men, the beſt diſciplined of any in Europe. Saxony had near fifty thouſand. Two French armies, each conſiſting of about forty thouſand men, were both in the heart of Germany, and almoſt at the gates of Vienna. The Spaniards were going to fall upon Italy; and at that time, it hardly appeared, that they had any enemies to contend with. They had even propoſed to put other ſprings in motion, which hiſtory will one day bring to light. We aſk, after all theſe preparations, if ever an enterprize had a better appearance? We aſk, if this project was not an hundred times more plauſible than yours? Small armies have ſometimes been ſeen to overthrow mighty empires. Here two hundred and fifty thouſand men attack a defenceleſs woman; and yet ſhe maintains her ground. Own it, Mr. Cardinal; there certainly is a Being above us who confounds the wiſeſt ſchemes of mortal men.

You are but ill informed for a great miniſter when you ſay, that this general whom you condemn, demanded a hundred thouſand men from cardinal Fleury. I can aſſure your eminence, that he demanded only fifty thouſand to march to Vienna, and among theſe twenty thouſand horſe. He only obtained thirty-two thouſand in all, of which but eight thouſand were horſe. But even theſe, with the troops of the allies, compoſed a force, which nothing ſeemed capable of reſiſting, inaſmuch as the enemy had not as yet aſſembled an army. On this point of hiſtory, I could inform your eminence of many things which you do not appear to know, and which would convince you that the man you affect to deſpiſe, was very worthy of your eſteem.

As I am ſtill alive, I dare not uſe the ſame freedom with you who are dead, and may ſay every thing with impunity: but I may venture, at leaſt, to give you a few particulars relating to the ſiege of Prague, which will make you change your opinion. You cannot deny that the ſallies were real battles, and that the retreat was glorious.

I know not what harm the cardinal de Fleury, and the general you mention, may have done you: but it appears to me, Sir, that a good chriſtian as you ought to have been, and a cardinal as you certainly was, ſhould on his death-bed have been reconciled with his enemies. Your Teſtament ſeems to me to have been compoſed *ab irato*; a circumſtance which alone is ſufficient to leſſen its authority.

This Teſtament will be more uſeful to politicians than to hiſtorians. The teſtator is far from falling into the abſurd errors of the forger who aſſumed

aſſumed the name of the cardinal de Richlieu. This bungling forger, in making the greateſt miniſter in Europe ſpeak, at the very criſis of the war between the king of Spain and the emperor, ſays not a word of the manner in which France ſhould have conducted herſelf with her allies, and her enemies. It was a ſtrange inconſiſtency to ſee the cardinal de Richlieu paſs over in ſilence the negociations, and the intereſts of all the princes, in order to talk of the univerſity and taxes. In this Teſtament the caſe is quite the reverſe. The author enters into the intereſt of all the potentates; aſſigns to each his particular ſhare; diſpoſes of the world at pleaſure; and puts himſelf in the place of Providence. He talks of all that might have been done, and of all that could poſſibly happen: his work is a collection of future contingencies.

There is not a ſimple or common thought in the whole of this Teſtament. It is there ſaid, that when the emperor Charles VII. was without dominions, and without an army, he ought to have put the queen of Hungary to the ban of the empire. It ſhould ſeem, however, that when a monarch paſſes ſuch a ſentence, he ought to have a hundred thouſand bailiffs to publiſh it to the world.

For the reſt, never did Teſtament contain more conſiderable legacies. The cardinal gives and bequeaths Bohemia to the elector of Saxony; the duchy of Zell to the duke of Cumberland; Tirol and Carinthia to the elector of Bavaria; Briſgau, with the Foreſt-towns, to the duke of Deux-Ponts; and the duchy of Deux-Ponts to the elector palatine. This is not unlike the teſtament which Ceriſantes the Gaſcon made at Naples

Naples in the time of the duke of Guiſe. He bequeathed to that prince his jewels and his gold plate, an hundred thouſand crowns to the Jeſuits, and the ſame ſum to an hoſpital. He likewiſe founded a college and a public library.

He had not wherewithal to defray the expences of his funeral.

DIALOGUES

BETWEEN

LUCRETIUS and POSSIDONIUS.

The firſt COLLOQUY.

POSSIDONIUS.

YOUR poetry is ſometimes admirable; but the philoſophy of Epicurus is, in my opinion, very bad.

LUCRETIUS.

What! will you not allow that the atoms, of their own accord, diſpoſed themſelves in ſuch a manner as to produce the univerſe?

POSSIDONIUS.

We mathematicians can admit nothing but what is proved by inconteſtible principles.

LUCRETIUS.

My principles are ſo.

Ex nihilo nihil, in nihilum nil poſſe reverti.
Tangere enim & tangi niſi corpus nulla poteſt res.

From nothing nought can ſpring, to nothing nought return.
Nought but a body can a body touch.

POSSIDONIUS.

Should I grant you theſe principles, and even your atoms and your vacuum, you can no more perſuade me that the univerſe put itſelf into the admirable order in which we now

behold it, than if you were to tell the Romans that the armillary ſphere compoſed by Poſſidonius made itſelf.

LUCRETIUS.

But who then could make the world?

POSSIDONIUS.

An intelligent Being, much more ſuperior to the world and to me, than I am to the braſs of which I made my ſphere.

LUCRETIUS.

How can you, who admit nothing but what is evident, acknowledge a principle of which you have not the leaſt idea?

POSSIDONIUS.

In the ſame manner as, before I knew you, I judged that your book was the work of a man of genius.

LUCRETIUS.

You allow that nature is eternal, and exiſts becauſe it does exiſt. Now if it exiſts by its own power, why may it not, by the ſame power, have formed ſuns, and worlds, and plants, and animals, and men?

POSSIDONIUS.

All the ancient philoſophers have ſuppoſed matter to be eternal, but have never proved it to be really ſo; and even allowing it to be eternal, it would by no means follow that it could form works in which there are ſo many ſtriking proofs of wiſdom and deſign. Suppoſe this ſtone to be eternal, if you will, you can never perſuade me that it could have compoſed the Iliad of Homer.

LUCRE-

LUCRETIUS.

No: a ſtone could never have compoſed the Iliad, any more than it could have produced a horſe: but matter organized in proceſs of time, and become bones, fleſh, and blood, will produce a horſe; and organized more finely, will produce the Iliad.

POSSIDONIUS.

You ſuppoſe all this without any proof; and I ought to admit nothing without proof. I will give you bones, fleſh, and blood, ready made, and will leave you and all the Epicureans in the world to make your beſt of them. Will you only conſent to this alternative; viz. to be put in poſſeſſion of the whole Roman empire, if, with all the ingredients ready prepared, you produce a horſe, and to be hanged if you fail in the attempt?

LUCRETIUS.

No; that ſurpaſſes my power, but not the power of nature. It requires millions of ages for nature, after having paſſed through all the poſſible forms, to arrive at laſt at the only one which can produce living beings.

POSSIDONIUS.

You might, if you pleaſed, continue all your life-time to ſhake in a caſk all the materials of the earth mixed together, you would never be able to form any regular figure; you could produce nothing. If the length of your life is not ſufficient to produce even a muſhroom, will the length of another man's life be ſufficient for that purpoſe? Why ſhould ſeveral

ages be able to effect what one age has not effected? One ought to have ſeen men and animals ſpring from the boſom of the earth, and corn produced without ſeed, &c. &c. before he ſhould venture to affirm that matter, by its own energy, could give itſelf ſuch forms; but no one that I know of hath ſeen ſuch an operation, and therefore no one ought to believe it.

LUCRETIUS.

Well! men, animals, and trees muſt always have exiſted. All the philoſophers allow that matter is eternal; and they muſt further allow, that generations are ſo likewiſe. 'Tis the very nature of matter that there ſhould be ſtars that revolve, birds that fly, horſes that run, and men that compoſe Iliads.

POSSIDONIUS.

In this new ſuppoſition you change your opinion; but you always ſuppoſe the point in queſtion, and admit a thing for which you have not the leaſt proof.

LUCRETIUS.

I am at liberty to believe, that what is today, was yeſterday, was a century ago, was an hundred centuries ago, and ſo on backwards without end. I make uſe of your argument: no one has ever ſeen the ſun and ſtars begin their courſe, nor the firſt animals formed and endowed with life. We may, therefore, ſafely believe that all things were from eternity as they are at preſent.

POSSIDONIUS.

There is a very great difference. I ſee an admirable deſign, and I ought to believe that an intelligent being formed that deſign.

LUCRETIUS.

You ought not to admit a being, of whom you have no knowledge.

POSSIDONIUS.

You might as well tell me, that I ought not to believe that an architect built the capitol, becauſe I never ſaw that architect.

LUCRETIUS.

Your compariſon is not juſt. You have ſeen houſes built, and you have ſeen architects; and therefore you ought to conclude that it was a man like our preſent architects that built the capitol. But here the caſe is very different: the capitol does not exiſt of itſelf, but matter does. It muſt neceſſarily have had ſome form; and why will you not allow it to poſſeſs, by its own energy, the form in which it now is? Is it not much eaſier for you to admit, that nature modifies itſelf, than to acknowledge a being that modifies it? In the former caſe you have only one difficulty to encounter, namely, to comprehend how nature acts. In the latter you have two difficulties to ſurmount, viz. to comprehend this ſame nature, and the viſible being that acts upon it.

POSSIDONIUS.

It is quite the reverſe. I ſee not only a difficulty, but even an impoſſibility in comprehending how matter can have infinite deſigns;

but I ſee no difficulty in admitting an intelligent being, who governs this matter by his infinite wiſdom, and by his almighty will.

LUCRETIUS.

What? Is it becauſe your mind cannot comprehend one thing, that you are to ſuppoſe another? Is it becauſe you do not underſtand the ſecret ſprings, and admirable contrivances, by which nature diſpoſed itſelf into planets, ſuns, and animals, that you have recourſe to another being?

POSSIDONIUS.

No; I have not recourſe to a god becauſe I cannot comprehend nature; but I plainly perceive that nature needs a ſupreme intelligence; and this reaſon alone would to me be a ſufficient proof of a deity, had I no other.

LUCRESIUS.

And what if this matter poſſeſſed intelligence of itſelf?

POSSIDONIUS.

It is plain to me that it does not poſſeſs it.

LUCRETIUS.

And to me it is plain that it does poſſeſs it, ſince I ſee bodies like you and me reaſon.

POSSIDONIUS.

If matter poſſeſſes, of itſelf, the faculty of thinking, you muſt affirm that it poſſeſſes it neceſſarily and independently: but if this property be eſſential to matter, it muſt have it at all times and in all places; for whatever is eſſential to a thing can never be ſeparated from it. A bit of clay, and even the vileſt excre-

ment

ment would think; but ſure you will not ſay that dung thinks. Thought, therefore, is not an eſſential attribute of matter.

LUCRETIUS.

Your reaſoning is a mere ſophiſm. I hold motion to be eſſential to matter; and yet this dung, or that piece of clay, are not actually in motion; but they will be ſo when they are impelled by ſome other body. In like manner thought will not be an attribute of a body, except when that body is organized for thinking.

POSSIDONIUS.

Your error proceeds from this, that you always ſuppoſe the point in queſtion. You do not reflect, that, in order to organize a body, to make it a man, to render it a thinking being, there muſt previouſly be thought, there muſt be a fixed deſign. But you cannot admit ſuch a thing as deſign, before the only beings in this world, capable of deſign, are formed; you cannot admit thought, before the only beings, capable of thinking, exiſt. You likewiſe ſuppoſe the point in queſtion, when you ſay that motion is neceſſary to matter; for what is abſolutely neceſſary always exiſts, as extenſion, for inſtance, exiſts always and in every part of matter: but motion does not exiſt always. The pyramids of Egypt are not ſurely in motion. A ſubtile matter, perhaps, may penetrate between the ſtones which compoſe the pyramids; but the body of the pyramid is immoveable. Motion, therefore, is not eſſential to matter, but is communicated to it by a foreign cauſe, in the ſame manner as thought is to men. Hence it follows, that there muſt be a power-

ful and intelligent being, who communicates motion, life, and thought to his creatures.

LUCRETIUS.

I can eaſily anſwer your objections, by ſaying, that there have always been motion and intelligence in the world. This motion and this intelligence have been diſtributed at all times, according to the laws of nature. Matter being eternal, it muſt neceſſarily have been in ſome order; but it could not be put into any order without thought and motion; and therefore thought and motion muſt have always been inherent in it.

POSSIDONIUS.

Do what you will, you can at beſt but make ſuppoſitions. You ſuppoſe an order; there muſt therefore have been ſome intelligent mind who formed this order. You ſuppoſe motion and thought before matter was in motion, and before there were men and thoughts. You muſt allow, that thought is not eſſential to matter, ſince you dare not ſay that a flint thinks. You can oppoſe nothing but a *perhaps* to the truth that preſſes hard upon you. You are ſenſible of the weakneſs of matter, and are forced to admit a ſupreme intelligent and almighty being, who organized matter and thinking beings. The deſigns of this ſuperior intelligence ſhine forth in every part of nature, and you muſt perceive them as diſtinctly in a blade of graſs, as in the courſe of the ſtars. Every thing is evidently directed to a certain end.

LUCRETIUS.

But do you not take for a deſign what is only a neceſſary exiſtence? Do you not take for

for an end what is no more than the uſe which we make of things that exiſt? The Argonautes built a ſhip to ſail to Colchis. Will you ſay that the trees were created in order, that the Argonautes might build a ſhip; and that the ſea was made to enable them to undertake their voyage? Men wear ſtockings: will you ſay that legs were made by the ſupreme being in ordered to be covered with ſtockings? No, doubtleſs; but the Argonautes, having ſeen wood, built a ſhip with it, and having learned that the water could carry a ſhip, they undertook their voyage. In the ſame manner, after an infinite number of forms and combinations which matter had aſſumed, it was found that the humours, and the tranſparent horn which compoſe the eye, and which were formerly ſeparated in different parts of the body, were united in the head, and animals began to ſee. The organs of generation, diſperſed before, were likewiſe collected, and took the form they now have; and then all kinds of procreation were conducted with regularity. The matter of the ſun, which had been long diffuſed and ſcattered through the univerſe, was conglobated, and formed the luminary that enlightens our world. Is there any thing impoſſible in all this?

POSSIDONIUS.

In fact, you cannot ſurely be ſerious when you have recourſe to ſuch a ſyſtem: for, in the firſt place, if you adopt this hypotheſis, you muſt of courſe reject the eternal generations of which you have juſt now been talking: and, in the ſecond place, you are miſtaken with

regard to final cauſes. There are voluntary uſes to which we apply the gifts of nature; and there are likewiſe neceſſary effects. The Argonautes needed not, unleſs they had pleaſed, have employed the trees of the foreſt to build a ſhip; but theſe trees were plainly deſtined to grow on the earth, and to produce fruits and leaves. We need not cover our legs with ſtockings; but the leg was evidently made to ſupport the body, and to walk, the eyes to ſee, the ears to hear, and the parts of generation to perpetuate the ſpecies. If you conſider that a ſtar, placed at the diſtance of four or five hundred millions of leagues from us, ſends forth rays of light, which make preciſely the ſame angle in the eyes of every animal; and that, at that inſtant, all animals have the ſenſation of light, you muſt acknowledge that this is an inſtance of the moſt admirable mechaniſm and deſign. But is it not unreaſonable to admit mechaniſm without a mechanic, a deſign without intelligence, and ſuch deſigns without a Supreme Being?

LUCRETIUS.

If I admit the Supreme Being, what form muſt I give him? Is he in one place? Is he out of all place? Is he in time or out of time? Does he fill the whole of ſpace, or does he not fill it? Why did he make the world? What was his end in making it? Why form ſenſible and unhappy beings? Why moral and natural evil? On whatever ſide I turn my mind, every thing appears dark and incomprehenſible.

POSSIDONIUS.

'Tis a neceſſary conſequence of the exiſtence of this Supreme Being that his nature ſhould be incomprehenſible; for, if he exiſts, there muſt be an infinite diſtance between him and us. We ought to believe that he is, without endeavouring to know what he is, or how he operates. Are you not obliged to admit aſymptotes in geometry, without comprehending how it is poſſible for the ſame lines to be always approaching, and yet never to meet? Are there not many things as incomprehenſible as demonſtrable, in the properties of the circle? Confeſs, therefore, that you ought to admit what is incomprehenſible, when the exiſtence of that incomprehenſible is proved.

LUCRETIUS.

What! muſt I renounce the dogmas of Epicurus?

POSSIDONIUS.

It is better to renounce Epicurus, than to abandon the dictates of reaſon.

The Second COLLOQUY.

LUCRETIUS.

I Begin to recognize a Supreme Being, inacceſſible to our ſenſes, and proved by our reaſon, who made the world, and preſerves it; but with regard to what I have ſaid of the ſoul,

in my third book, which has been ſo much admired by all the learned men of Rome, I hardly think you can oblige me to alter my opinion.

POSSIDONIUS.

You ſay,

Idque ſitum media regione in pectoris hæret.

The mind is in the middle of the breaſt.

But, when you compoſed your beautiful verſes, did you never make any effort of the head? When you ſpeak of the orators Cicero and Mark Anthony, do you not ſay that they had good heads? And were you to ſay that they had good breaſts, would not people imagine that you was talking of their voice and lungs?

LUCRETIUS.

Are you not convinced, from experience, that the feelings of joy, of ſorrow, and of fear, are formed about the heart?

Hic exultat enim pavor ac metus; hæc loca circum Lætitiæ mulcent.

For there our paſſions live, our joy, our fear,
And hope. CREECH.

Do you not feel your heart dilate or contract itſelf on the hearing of good or bad news? Is it not poſſeſſed of ſome ſecret ſprings of a yielding and elaſtic quality? This, therefore, muſt be the ſeat of the ſoul.

POSSIDONIUS.

There are two nerves which proceed from the brain, paſs through the heart and ſtomach, reach to the parts of generation, and communicate

nicate motion to them; but would you therefore ſay, that the human mind reſides in the parts of generations?

LUCRETIUS.

No; I dare not ſay ſo. But though I ſhould place the ſoul in the head, inſtead of placing it in the breaſt, my principles will ſtill ſubſiſt: the ſoul will ſtill be an infinitely ſubtile matter, reſembling the elementary fire, that animates the whole machine.

POSSIDONIUS.

And why do you imagine that a ſubtile matter can have thoughts and ſentiments of itſelf?

LUCRETIUS.

Becauſe I experience it; becauſe all the parts of my body, when touched, preſently feel the impreſſion; becauſe this feeling is diffuſed thro' my whole machine; becauſe it could not be diffuſed through it but by a matter of a very ſubtile nature, and of a very rapid motion; becauſe I am a body, and one body cannot be affected but by another; becauſe the interior part of my body could not be penetrated but by very ſmall corpuſcles; and, of conſequence, my ſoul muſt be an aſſemblage of theſe corpuſcles.

POSSIDONIUS.

We have already agreed, in our firſt colloquy, that it is extremely improbable that a rock could compoſe the Iliad. Will a ray of the ſun be more capable of compoſing it? Suppoſe this ray an hundred thouſand times more ſubtile and rapid than uſual, will this light, or this

this tenuity of parts, produce thoughts and ſentiments?

LUCRETIUS.

Perhaps they may, when placed in organs properly prepared.

POSSIDONIUS.

You are perpetually reduced to your *perhaps*. Fire, of itſelf, is no more capable of thinking than ice. Should I ſuppoſe that it is fire that thinks, perceives, and wills in you, you would then be forced to acknowledge that it is not by its own virtue that it hath either will, thought, or perception.

LUCRETIUS.

No; theſe ſenſations will be produced not by its own virtue, but by the aſſemblage of the fire, and of my organs.

POSSIDONIUS.

How can you imagine that two bodies, neither of which can think apart, ſhould be able to produce thought, when joined together?

LUCRETIUS.

In the ſame manner as a tree and earth, when taken ſeparately, do not produce fruit; but do ſo, when the tree is planted in the earth.

POSSIDONIUS.

The compariſon is only ſpecious. This tree hath it in the ſeeds of fruit: we plainly perceive them in the buds, and the moiſture of the earth unfolds the ſubſtance of theſe fruits. Fire, therefore, muſt poſſeſs in itſelf the ſeeds of thought, and the organs of the body ſerve only to develope theſe ſeeds.

LUCRE-

LUCRETIUS.

And do you find any thing impoſſible in this?

POSSIDONIUS.

I find that this fire, this highly refined matter, is as devoid of the faculty of thinking as a ſtone. The production of a being muſt have ſomething ſimilar to that which produced it; but thought, will, and perception, have nothing ſimilar to fiery matter.

LUCRETIUS.

Two bodies, ſtruck againſt each other, produce motion, and yet this motion has nothing ſimilar to the two bodies; it has none of their three dimenſions, nor has it any figure. A being, therefore, may have nothing ſimilar to that which produced it; and, of conſequence, thought may ſpring from an aſſemblage of two bodies which have no thought.

POSSIDONIUS.

This compariſon likewiſe is more ſpecious than juſt. I ſee nothing but matter in two bodies in motion: I only ſee bodies paſſing from one place to another. But when we reaſon together, I ſee no matter in your ideas, or in my own. I ſhall only obſerve, that I can no more conceive how one body has the power of moving another, than I can comprehend the manner of my having ideas. To me, both are equally inexplicable; and both equally prove the exiſtence and the power of a Supreme Being, the author of thought and motion.

LUCRETIUS.

If our ſoul is not a ſubtile fire, an ethereal quinteſſence, what is it?

POSSIDONIUS.

Neither you nor I know aught of the matter. I will tell you plainly what it is not; but I cannot tell you what it actually is. I ſee that it is a power lodged in my body; that I did not give myſelf this power; and, of conſequence, that it muſt have come from a Being ſuperior to myſelf.

LUCRETIUS.

You did not give yourſelf life: you received it from your father; from whom likewiſe, together with life, you received the faculty of thinking, as he had received both from his father, and ſo on backwards to infinity. You no more know the true principle of life, than you do that of thought. This ſucceſſion of living and thinking beings hath always exiſted.

POSSIDONIUS.

I plainly ſee, that you are always obliged to abandon the ſyſtem of Epicurus; and that you dare no longer maintain, that the declination of atoms produced thought. I have already, in our laſt colloquy, refuted the eternal ſucceſſion of ſenſible and thinking beings. I ſhewed you, that, if there were material beings capable of thinking by their own power, thought muſt neceſſarily be an attribute eſſential to all matter; that, if matter thought neceſſarily, and by its own virtue, all matter muſt of courſe think: but this is not the caſe, and therefore it is impoſſible to maintain a ſucceſſion of material beings,

beings, who, of themſelves, poſſeſs the faculty of thinking.

LUCRETIUS.

Notwithſtanding this reaſoning, which you repeat, it is certain that a father communicates a ſoul to his ſon, at the ſame time that he forms his body. This ſoul and this body grow together; they gradually acquire ſtrength; they are ſubject to calamities, and to the infirmities of old age. The decay of our ſtrength draws along with it that of our judgment: the effect, at laſt, ceaſes with the cauſe, and the ſoul vaniſhes like ſmoke into air.

Præterea, gigni pariter cum corpore, & unà
Creſcere ſentimus, pariterque ſeneſcere mentem.
Nam velut infirmo pueri, teneroque vagantur
Corpore, ſic animi ſequitur ſententia tenuis.
Inde ubi robuſtis adolevit viribus ætas,
Conſilium quoque majus, & auctior eſt animi vis.
Poſt ubi jam validis quaſſatum eſt viribus ævi
Corpus, & obtuſis ceciderunt viribus artus:
Claudicat ingenium, delirat linguaque, menſque;
Omnia deficiunt, atque uno tempore deſunt,
Ergo diſſolvi quoque convenit omnem animai
Naturam, ceu ſumus in altas aeris auras:
Quandoquidem gigni pariter, pariterque videmus
Creſcere, & (ut docui) ſimul ævo feſſa fatiſcit.

Beſides, 'tis plain that ſouls are born, and grow;
And all by age decay, as bodies do:
To prove this truth; in infants, minds appear
Infirm, and tender as their bodies are:
In man, the mind is ſtrong; when age prevails,
And the quick vigour of each member fails,

The

The mind's pow'rs too decreaſe, and waſte apace;
And grave and rev'rend folly takes the place.
'Tis likely then the ſoul and mind muſt die;
Like ſmoke in air, its ſcatter'd atoms fly:
Since all theſe proofs have ſhewn, theſe reaſons told,
'Tis with the body born, grows ſtrong, and old.
CREECH.

POSSIDONIUS.

Theſe, to be ſure, are very fine verſes; but do you thereby inform me of the nature of the ſoul?

LUCRETIUS.

No; I only give you its hiſtory, and I reaſon with probability.

POSSIDONIUS.

Where is the probability of a father's communicating to his ſon the faculty of thinking?

LUCRETIUS.

Do you not daily ſee children reſembling their fathers in their inclinations, as well as in their features?

POSSIDONIUS.

But does not a father, in begetting his ſon, act as a blind agent? Does he pretend, when he enjoys his wife, to make a ſoul, or to make thoughts? Do either of them know the manner in which a child is formed in the mother's womb? Muſt we not, in this caſe, have recourſe to a ſuperior cauſe, as well as in all the other operations of nature which we have examined? Muſt you not ſee, if you are in earneſt,

neſt, that men give themſelves nothing, but are under the hand of an abſolute maſter?

LUCRETIUS.

If you know more of the matter than I do, tell me what the ſoul is.

POSSIDONIUS

I do not pretend to know what it is more than you. Let us endeavour to enlighten each other. Tell me, firſt, what is vegetation?

LUCRETIUS.

It is an internal motion, that carries the moiſture of the earth into plants, makes them grow, unfolds their fruits, expands their leaves, &c.

POSSIDONIUS.

Surely, you do not think that there is a being called *Vegetation* that performs theſe wonders!

LUCRETIUS.

Who ever thought ſo?

POSSIDONIUS.

From our former colloquy you ought to conclude, that the tree did not give vegetation to itſelf.

LUCRETIUS.

I am forced to allow it.

POSSIDONIUS.

Tell me next what life is.

LUCRETIUS.

It is vegetation joined with perception in an organized body.

POS-

POSSIDONIUS.

And is there not a being called life that gives perception to an organized body?

LUCRETIUS.

Doubtleſs, vegetation and life are words which ſignify things that live and vegetate.

POSSIDONIUS.

If a tree and an animal cannot give themſelves life and vegetation, can you give yourſelf thoughts?

LUCRETIUS.

I think I can; for I think of whatever I pleaſe. My intention was to converſe with you about metaphyſics, and I have done ſo.

POSSIDONIUS.

You think that you are maſter of your ideas: do you know then what thoughts you will have in an hour, or in a quarter of an hour?

LUCRETIUS.

I muſt own that I do not.

POSSIDONIUS.

You frequently have ideas in your ſleep; you make verſes in a dream: Cæſar takes cities: I reſolve problems; and hounds purſue the ſtag in their dreams. Ideas, therefore, come to us independently of our own will: they are given us by a Superior Being.

LUCRETIUS.

In what manner do you mean? Do you ſuppoſe that the Supreme Being is continually employed

ployed in communicating ideas; or that he created incorporeal ſubſtances, which were afterwards capable of forming ideas of themſelves, ſometimes with the aſſiſtance of the ſenſes, and ſometimes without it? Are theſe ſubſtances formed at the moment of the animal's conception? or are they formed before its conception? Do they wait for bodies, in order to inſinuate themſelves into them? or are they not lodged there till the animal is capable of receiving them? Or, in fine, is it in the Supreme Being that every animated being ſees the ideas of things? What is your opinion?

POSSIDONIUS.

When you tell me how our will produces an inſtantaneous motion in our bodies, how your arm obeys your will, how we receive life, how food digeſts in the ſtomach, and how corn is transformed into blood, I will then tell you how we have ideas. With regard to all theſe particulars, I frankly confeſs my ignorance. The world, perhaps, may one day obtain new lights; but from the time of Thales to the preſent age, we have not had any All we can do is to be ſenſible of our own weakneſs, to acknowledge an Almighty Being, and to be upon our guard againſt theſe ſyſtems.

OF LANGUAGES.

THERE is no language abſolutely perfect; none that can expreſs all our ideas and all our ſenſations, the nice and delicate diſtinctions of which are too numerous and too imperceptible. No man can make known the preciſe degree of feeling which he has in his own breaſt. We are obliged, for inſtance, to diſtinguiſh by the general name of love and hatred, a thouſand different kinds of love and hatred: and the caſe is the ſame with all our pains and pleaſures. Thus all languages are, like ourſelves, imperfect.

They have all been formed ſucceſſively, and by degrees, according to our ſeveral wants and neceſſities; the firſt grammars were inſenſibly formed by that inſtinct which is common to all men. The Laplanders and the Negroes, as well as the Greeks, had occaſion to expreſs the paſt, the preſent, and the future; and they did ſo. But as no language was ever formed by an aſſembly of logicians, none, of conſequence, has ever arrived at a perfect and regular plan.

All words in all poſſible tongues are neceſſarily the pictures of our ſenſations. Men can never expreſs what they do not feel. Thus all languages are become metaphorical, and all tend to enlighten the mind: the heart burns, the judgment ſees, compounds, unites, divides, wanders, collects itſelf, and is diſſipated.

All nations have agreed to give the name of breath or ſpirit to the human ſoul or underſtanding, whoſe effects they perceive without ſeeing

ſeeing its ſubſtance, after having given the name of breath, wind, or ſpirit, to the motion of the air, whoſe ſubſtance they can no more diſcern.

Among all nations infinite hath ever been a negation of finite; and immenſity a negation of meaſure. It is evident that all languages have ſprung from our five ſenſes, as well as all our ideas.

The leaſt imperfect are like the laws; thoſe which are leaſt arbitrary are the beſt.

The moſt perfect languages muſt neceſſarily be ſuch, as are ſpoken by thoſe nations, who have cultivated the polite and the ſocial arts with the greateſt induſtry and ſucceſs. Thus the Hebrew, like the people who ſpoke it, muſt neceſſarily be one of the pooreſt tongues in the univerſe. How could the Jews, who, before the time of Solomon, had not a ſingle boat; how could they have any ſea-terms? How could they have any terms of philoſophy, who were plunged in a ſtate of the moſt profound ignorance, till they began to learn ſomething in their Babyloniſh captivity? The Phœnician tongue, from which the Jews borrowed their jargon, muſt have been greatly ſuperior, as it was the language of a rich, induſtrious, and commercial people, diffuſed throughout the univerſe.

The moſt ancient tongue we know muſt be the language of that nation which was moſt anciently formed into a political body. It muſt further be the language of that nation which has been leaſt frequently ſubdued; or, when it has been ſubdued, has always civilized its conquerors. And in both theſe reſpects the Chineſe

Chineſe and the Arabic are the moſt ancient of all the modern languages.

There is no mother-tongue. All the neighbouring nations have mutually borrowed from each other; but we have given the name of mother-tongue to thoſe languages, from which ſome known idioms are derived. The Latin, for inſtance, is the mother-tongue to the Italian, the Spaniſh, and the French. But the Latin itſelf was derived from the Tuſcan; and the Tuſcan from the Celtic and the Greek.

The moſt beautiful language muſt certainly be that which is, at once, the moſt compleat, the moſt ſonorous, the moſt various in its expreſſions, and the moſt regular in its compoſition; that which has the greateſt number of compound words, which by its proſody moſt happily expreſſes the ſlow or impetuous motions of the ſoul, and approaches the neareſt to muſick.

The Greek hath all theſe advantages; and is free from the harſhneſs of the Latin, in which there are ſo many words that end in *um*, *ur*, and *us*. It hath all the pomp of the Spaniſh, and all the ſweetneſs of the Italian. And it excels all the living languages in the harmony of its expreſſion, owing to its great variety of long and ſhort ſyllables: ſo that, diſfigured as it now is in Greece, it may ſtill be conſidered as the fineſt language in the univerſe.

The moſt beautiful language cannot be the moſt generally uſed, when the people who ſpeak it are oppreſſed with ſlavery, few in number, deprived of all commerce with other nations, and when theſe other nations have improved their

native tongues. Thus the Greek muſt be confined within narrower bounds than the Arabic, or even than the Turkiſh language.

Of all the European languages, the French muſt be the moſt general, becauſe it is the beſt adapted to converſation. It has taken its character from that of the people who ſpeak it.

Of all nations in the world the French have, for almoſt theſe three hundred and fifty years paſt, moſt induſtriouſly cultivated the arts of ſocial life: they were the firſt that freed it from all manner of conſtraint; they were the firſt among whom the women became free and even ſovereign, while in other countries they were no better than ſlaves. The Syntax of this tongue, which is always uniform, and admits of no inverſions, is another advantage which hardly any other tongue poſſeſſes. In a word, the French language is a more current coin than others, though it ſhould even happen to want weight. The prodigious number of agreeably frivolous books which France has produced, is a freſh reaſon of that favourable reception which its language has met with in other nations.

Books of ſcience will never make a language general. People will tranſlate theſe books: they will ſtudy the philoſophy of Newton; but they will not learn the Engliſh, in order to underſtand him.

Another circumſtance that renders the French language more common than any other, is the perfection to which our theatre has been carried. It is to a Cinna, a Phedra, and a Miſanthrope, that it owes its reputation, and not to the conqueſts of Lewis XIV.

It is neither ſo ſmooth and copious as the Italian, ſo majeſtic as the Spaniſh, nor ſo nervous as the Engliſh; and yet it has made a greater figure in the world than theſe three languages; owing to this circumſtance alone, that it is fitter for converſation, and that there are a greater number of agreeable books in it than in any other tongue. In a word, it has ſucceeded like the French cooks, becauſe it has more happily flattered the general taſte.

The ſame ſpirit that hath led other nations to imitate the French in their furniture, the diſtribution of their rooms, their gardens, their dances, and every other graceful accompliſhment, hath likewiſe led them to ſpeak their language. The great art of good French writers is preciſely the ſame with that of the French women, who ſet themſelves off to better advantage than the other women of Europe, and without being more beautiful in reality appear to be ſo by the elegance of their dreſs, and by that charming behaviour, at once ſo noble and ſimple, which they aſſume and ſupport with ſo much eaſe and freedom.

It is by the arts of poliſhing and refining, that this language has at laſt baniſhed all traces of its ancient barbarity. Every thing would ſhow this barbarity to any one who would examine the matter with attention. He would find that the number *vingt* comes from *viginti*; and that we formerly pronounced the *g* and the *t* with that harſhneſs which is natural to all the northern nations. From the month of *Auguſtus* is derived the month of *Aouſt*.

It

It is not long ſince a German prince, ſuppoſing that the word *Auguſtus* was never pronounced otherwiſe in France, called Auguſtus king of Poland, king *Aouſt*.

From *Pavo* we form *Paon*. We once pronounced it like *Phaon*, and we now ſay *Pan*.

From *Lupus* is derived *Loup*, and we formerly ſounded the *p* with a moſt diſagreeable roughneſs. All the letters which we have ſince ſuppreſſed in pronouncing, but retained in writing, are proofs of the barbarity of our ancient cuſtoms.

We did not begin to ſoften our language till we had ſoftened our manners. It was rude and unpoliſhed till Francis I. called the ladies to court. One might as well have talked the ancient Celtic as the French in the time of Charles VIII. and Lewis XII. The German was not more harſh and unmuſical. All the imperfect tenſes had a hideous ſound: every ſyllable was pronounced in *aiemoient*, *faiſoient*, *croyoient*, they ſaid, *croy-oi-ent*. This was the croaking of ravens, as the emperor Julian ſaid of the ancient Celtic, rather than the language of men.

It required whole ages to wipe off this ruſt. The imperfections that ſtill remain would be intolerable, were it not for the pains we conſtantly take to ſhun them, as a ſkilful rider ſhuns the ſtones on the road.

Good writers take care to combat thoſe vicious expreſſions, which are firſt brought into vogue by the ignorance of the people, and being afterwards adopted by bad authors, paſs into the gazettes and public writings. Thus from the Italian word *celata*, which ſignifies *elmo*,

caſque, *armet*, the French ſoldiers in Italy have formed the word *ſalade*: ſo that when we ſay, *il a pris ſa ſalade*, we do not know whether the perſon mentioned has taken his helmet or his lettuce. The writers of the gazettes have tranſlated the word *ridotto* by *redoubte*, which ſignifies a kind of fortification; but a man that knows the language will always preſerve the word *aſſemblée*. Roaſt-beef in Engliſh ſignifies *bœuf-roti*; and our inn-keepers now talk to us of the roaſt-beef of mutton. Riding-coat means *un habit de cheval*: from thence we have formed *redingotte*; and the people take it for an old word of our own language. Men of letters have been obliged to adopt this word as well as the people, becauſe it ſignifies a thing adapted to a particular cuſtom.

The populace ſubdues the court, if we may uſe the expreſſion, in fixing the terms of arts and trades, and things abſolutely neceſſary, as well as in matters of religion. Thoſe who treat the vulgar with the greateſt contempt are yet obliged to ſpeak, and even to think, in appearance like them.

It is no argument of bad language to call things by thoſe names which the mob has given them; but one may eaſily diſcover the ſuperior ingenuity of one nation above another by the propriety of the names they give to every thing.

It is only for want of imagination, that people apply the ſame expreſſion to an hundred different ideas. It argues a ridiculous barrenneſs of invention, not to be able to expreſs otherwiſe, *un bras de mer*, *un bras de balance*, *un bras de fauteuil*. It ſhews a great poverty

verty of genius to ſay equally *la tête d'un clou*, and *la tête d'un armée*. We every where find the word *cu*, and always improperly applied. A ſtreet without a thoroughfare bears no reſemblance to a *cu de ſac*; a plain man would have called theſe kinds of ſtreets, *des impaſſes*; the populace have called them *cus*, and queens have been obliged to call them ſo likewiſe. The bottom of an artichoak, and the point that terminates the lower part of a lamp, have no more reſemblance to a *cu*, than theſe ſtreets without a paſſage: and yet we always ſay, *cu de artichaud*, and *cu de lampe*, becauſe the people that formed the language were then rude and unpoliſhed. The Italians, who had a better right than we to employ this expreſſion, have taken care to refrain from it. The people of Italy, naturally more ingenious than their neighbours, have formed a language much more copious than ours.

The cry of every animal ſhould have a particular term to expreſs it. It diſcovers a ſhameful poverty of language to want diſtinct expreſſions for the chirping of a bird, and for the cry of a child; and to call things ſo different by the ſame name. The word *vagiſſement*, derived from the Latin *vagitus*, might very well have expreſſed the cry of infants in the cradle.

Ignorance hath introduced another cuſtom into all the modern languages. There are thouſands of words that no longer ſignify what they ought to ſignify. *Idiot* formerly meant *ſolitaire*; now it means *ſot*. *Epiphanie* ſignified *ſuperficie*; at preſent it is the twelfth day. *Baptiſer* is to plunge in water; we ſay to baptize by the name of John or James.

To theſe defects of almoſt all languages may be added ſome barbarous irregularities. *Garçon*, *courtiſan*, *coureur*, are decent words; *garce*, *courtiſane*, *coureuſe*, are indecent. *Venus* is a charming word, *vénirién* is abominable.

Another effect of the irregularity of thoſe languages which were compoſed at random, in times of ignorance and barbarity, is the great number of compound words whoſe ſimples no longer exiſt. Theſe are children that have loſt their father. We *architraves*, but no *traves*; *architectes*, but no *tectes*; *ſoubaſſements*, but no *baſſements*. There are things *ineffables*, but none *effables*. One may be *intrepide*, but none *trepide*; *impotent*, but not *potent*. A fund is *inepuiſable*, but cannot be *puiſable*. There are people *impudents* and *inſolents*; but none *pudents*, or *ſolents*. *Nonchalant* ſignifies *pareſſeux*, and *chalant* a *chapman*.

Theſe defects are to be found in a greater or leſs degree, in all languages: theſe are wild and uncultivated lands from which the hand of a ſkilful artiſt can derive great advantage.

There are daily gliding into languages other faults which mark the genius of a people. In France new modes are introduced into our manner of expreſſion, as well as into head-dreſſes. If a patient or a phyſician of faſhion takes it into his head to ſay that he hath a *ſoupçon* of a fever, to ſignify that he hath a ſlight touch of it, in a moment the whole nation ſhall have *ſoupçons* of a cholic, *ſoupçons* of hatred, love, and ridicule. The preachers tell you from the pulpit, that you ought at leaſt to have a *ſoupçon* of love to God. In a few months this mode is laid aſide to make room for another.

Vis-

Vis-a-vis is every where introduced. You find people in all companies *vis-a-vis* their inclinations and their intereſt. The courtiers are well or ill *vis-a-vis* the king. The miniſters are embarraſſed *vis-a-vis* themſelves. The parliament in a body inform the nation that they have been the defenders of the laws *vis-a-vis* the archbiſhop. And the clergy are *vis-a-vis* the Deity in a ſtate of perdition.

But what moſt corrupts the purity of a language, is not this tranſient mode of expreſſion, with which we are ſoon diſguſted; nor is it the frequent uſe of thoſe ſoleciſms which prevail in good company, and into which good authors never fall: it is the affectation of middling authors, to diſcourſe of the moſt ſerious things in the ſtile of converſation. You may read in our new books of philoſophy that we ought not to make *à pure perte les frais de penſer*; that eclipſes are *en droit d'effrayer le peuple*; that Epicurus had a body *a l'uniſon de ſon ame*; that *Clodius renvia ſur Auguſte*, and a thouſand other expreſſions of the like nature, worthy of the lacquey of the *Precieuſes ridicules*.

The ſtile of the king's orders and decrees pronounced in the courts of juſtice, is ſufficient to ſhew the depth of barbarity from which we have but lately emerged. We laugh at the following expreſſion in the comedy of the Plaideurs:

Lequel Jérome après pleuſieurs rebellions
Aurait atteint, frappé, moi ſergent à la joue.

Yet it happens unluckily that the compilers of our gazettes and journals have fallen into the ſame inconſiſtency; and you read in the

lic papers; *On a apris que la flotte aurait mis à la voile le 7 Mars, & qu'elle auroit double les Sortingues.*

Every thing conſpires to corrupt a language that is once become ſomewhat general! the authors, who vitiate its ſtile by affectation; thoſe who write in a foreign country, and who almoſt always intermix foreign expreſſions with their native tongue; the merchants who introduce into converſation the terms of the counting-houſe, and who tell you that England arms the fleet, but that *per contra* France equips veſſels; and the wits of foreign countries, who, ignorant of the idiom of the language, tell you that a young prince has been very well *éduqué*, inſtead of ſaying that he has received a good education.

But though all languages be imperfect, it does not from thence follow that we ought to change them. We ought inwardly to adhere to that manner of expreſſion which has been uſed by good authors; and when there is a ſufficient number of approved authors, the language is then fixed. Thus we cannot make any innovations in the Italian, the Spaniſh, the Engliſh, or the French, without corrupting them. And the reaſon is plain; for we ſhould by this means, ſoon render unintelligible thoſe books which, at once, contribute to the inſtruction and entertainment of the world.

THOUGHTS

THOUGHTS

ON THE

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION.

I.

PUFFENDORF, and thoſe who write like him on the intereſts of princes, make almenacks, which are defective even for the current year, and which next year are abſolutely good for nothing.

II.

Who would have ſaid at the peace of Nimeguen, that Spain, Mexico, Peru, Naples, Sicily, and Parma, would one day belong to the houſe of France?

III.

Could any one foreſee at the time that Charles XII. governed Sweden with deſpotic ſway, that his ſucceſſors would have no more authority than the kings of Poland?

IV.

The kings of Denmark were doges about a century ago; at preſent they are abſolute.

V.

The Ruſſians in former times, ſold themſelves like the Negroes; at preſent, they have ſuch a high opinion of their own merit, that they will not admit foreign ſoldiers into their army, and

they reckon it a point of honour never to deſert; but they muſt ſtill employ foreign officers, becauſe the nation has not yet acquired ſo much ſkill as courage, having only learned to obey.

VI.

Animals accuſtomed to the yoke offer themſelves to it of their own accord. Some obſcure compiler of the letters of queen Chriſtina, has offered an inſult to the common ſenſe of mankind by juſtifying the murder of Monaldeſqui, who was aſſaſſinated at Fontainebleau by order of a Swediſh lady, under pretence that this lady had once been queen. None but the aſſaſſins employed by her could have had the impudence to alledge that that princeſs might lawfully do at Fontainebleau, what would have been a crime at Stockholm.

VII.

That government would be worthy of the Hottentots, in which a certain number of men ſhould be allowed to ſay: "Thoſe who labour ought to pay; we ought to pay nothing, becauſe we are idle."

VIII.

That government would be an inſult both on God and man, in which the citizens might ſay: "The ſtate has given us all we poſſeſs; and we owe it nothing but prayers."

IX.

The more reaſon is improved, the more does it deſtroy the ſeeds of religious wars. It is the ſpirit of philoſophy that has baniſhed this plague from the earth.

X.

X.

Were Luther and Calvin to return to the world, they would make no more noiſe than the Scotiſts and the Thomiſts. The reaſon is, they would appear in an age when men begin to be enlightened.

XI.

It is only in times of barbarity that we ſee ſorcerers, and people poſſeſſed by evil ſpirits, kings excommunicated, and ſubjects abſolved from their oath of allegiance by doctors.

XII.

There is a convent in the world, entirely uſeleſs in every reſpect, which enjoys an income of two hundred thouſand livres. Reaſon ſhews that if theſe two hundred thouſand livres were given to an hundred officers who ſhould marry, there would be an hundred uſeful citizens rewarded, an hundred young women provided for, and at leaſt, four hundred perſons more in the ſtate at the end of ten years, inſtead of fifty ſluggards. It further ſhews that if theſe fifty ſluggards were reſtored to their country, they would cultivate the earth and people it; and that of courſe there would be more labourers and ſoldiers. This is what is wiſhed for by every one, from the prince of the blood to the vine-dreſſer. Superſtition alone oppoſed it formerly; but reaſon, acting in ſubordination to faith, ought to cruſh ſuperſtition.

XIII.

A prince with a ſingle word can at leaſt prevent young people from making vows before the age of twenty-five; and ſhould any one ſay to

the ſovereign, "What will become of young ladies of rank, whom we commonly ſacrifice to the eldeſt ſons of our families?" The prince may reply, "they will become what they are in Sweden, Denmark, Pruſſia, England, and Holland; they will produce citizens; they were born for propagation, and not to repeat Latin, which they do not underſtand. A woman that nouriſhes two children and ſpins, is more uſeful to the ſtate than all the convents in the world."

XIV.

It is a great happineſs both to the prince and the ſtate, that there are a number of philoſophers who impreſs theſe maxims on the minds of the people.

XV.

Philoſophers having no particular intereſt, can only ſpeak in favour of reaſon, and of the public good.

XVI.

Philoſophers love religion; and are uſeful to kings by deſtroying ſuperſtition, which is always an enemy to princes.

XVII.

It was ſuperſtition that occaſioned the aſſaſſination of Henry III. of Henry IV. of William prince of Orange, and of ſo many others. To it we ought to aſcribe the rivers of blood that have been ſhed ſince the time of Conſtantine.

XVIII.

Superſtition is the moſt dreadful enemy of the human kind. When it rules the prince it hinders him from conſulting the good of his people; when

when it rules the people, it makes them rebel againſt their prince.

XIX.

There is not a ſingle example in hiſtory of philoſophers oppoſing themſelves to the laws of the prince. There never was an age in which ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm did not occaſion commotions that fill us with horror.

XX.

Liberty conſiſts in depending upon the laws only. In this view every man is free in Sweden, England, Holland, Switzerland, Geneva, and Hamburg. The caſe is the ſame in Venice and Genoa; though in theſe two places, whoever does not belong to the body of the nobles is deſpiſed and contemned. But there are ſtill many provinces, and large chriſtian kingdoms, where the greateſt part of the people are ſlaves.

XXI.

A time will come in theſe countries, when ſome prince more accompliſhed than his predeceſſors, will make the labourers of the land ſenſible, that it is not wholly for their intereſt, that a man, who has one horſe, or ſeveral horſes, that is, a nobleman, ſhould have a right to kill a peaſant, by laying ten crowns on his grave. Ten crowns, it is true, is a very conſiderable ſum to a man born in a certain climate; but in proceſs of time people will have the ſagacity to diſcover that it is of little uſe to a dead man. The commons then may poſſibly be admitted to a ſhare in the adminiſtration; and the form of government, which prevails in England and Sweden, may perhaps be eſtabliſhed in the neighbourhood of Turky.

XXII.

XXII.

A citizen of Amſterdam is a man; a citizen a few degrees of longitude from thence is a beaſt of burthen.

XXIII.

All men are born equal; but a native of Morocco never dreams of ſuch a truth.

XXIV.

This equality does not deſtroy ſubordination. As men, we are all equal: as members of ſociety we are not. All natural rights belong equally to the Sultan and to a Boſtangi. Both of them may diſpoſe with the ſame freedom of their perſons, their families, and their effects. Thus in things eſſential all men are equal, though they play different parts on the theatre of the world.

XXV.

People are always aſking what is the beſt form of government. Put this queſtion to a miniſter or to his deputy; they will doubtleſs be for abſolute power. Put it to a baron; he would have the baronage to have a ſhare in the legiſlative power. The biſhops will ſay the ſame. The citizen would have you to conſult reaſon; and the peaſant would not wiſh to be forgot. The beſt government ſeems to be that in which all ranks of men are equally protected by the laws.

XXVI.

A republican is always more ſtrongly attached to his own country than a ſubject is to his; and for this good reaſon too, that men have a greater regard for their own property than for that of their maſter.

XXVII.

What is the love of our country? a compound of ſelf-love and prejudice, which the good of ſociety has exalted into the chief of the virtues. It is of great conſequence that this vague word, "The public," ſhould make a deep impreſſion.

XXVIII.

When the lord of a caſtle, or the inhabitant of a city blame the exerciſe of abſolute power, and complain of the oppreſſion of the peaſants, believe them not. Few people complain of evils which they do not feel. Beſides, the citizens and gentlemen ſeldom hate the perſon of their ſovereign, except in a civil war. What they hate is abſolute power in the fourth or fifth hand: it is the anti-chamber of a deputy, or of a ſecretary of an intendant that occaſions their murmurs: it is becauſe they have received a rebuff from an inſolent valet in the palace, that they groan in their deſolate fields.

XXIX.

The Engliſh reproach the French with ſerving their maſters chearfully. The following verſes are the beſt that have ever been written in England on that ſubject.

"A nation here I pity, and admire;
"Whom nobleſt ſentiments of glory fire:
"Yet taught by cuſtom's force, and bigot fear,
"To ſerve with pride, and boaſt the yoke they bear:
"Whoſe nobles, born to cringe, and to command,
"In courts a mean, in camps a generous band,

"From

" From prieſts and ſtock-jobbers content receive
" Thoſe laws their dreaded arms to Europe give:
" Whoſe people vain in want, in bondage bleſt,
" Though plundered gay, induſtrious though oppreſt,
" With happy follies riſe above their fate;
" The jeſt and envy of a wiſer ſtate."

In anſwer to all theſe declamations with which the Engliſh poetry, pamphlets, and ſermons are filled, we may obſerve that it is very natural to love a houſe which hath reigned for near eight hundred years. Several foreigners, and among theſe ſome Engliſhmen, have come to ſettle in France, merely for the ſake of living happily.

XXX.

A king who is never contradicted, can hardly be bad.

XXXI.

Some Engliſh peaſants, who have never travelled farther than London, imagine that the king of France, when he has nothing elſe to do, ſends for a preſident, and by way of amuſement gives his eſtate to a valet of the wardrobe.

XXXII.

There are few countries in the world where the fortunes of individuals are more ſecure than in France. When count Maurice de Naſſau was ſetting out from the Hague, in order to take upon him the command of the Dutch infantry, he aſked me, if the French would confiſcate the rents which he had a right to receive from the

Town-Houſe of Paris. "They will pay you," ſaid I, "exactly on the ſame day with count Maurice de Saxe, who commands the French army;" and my prediction was literally fulfilled.

XXXIII.

Lewis XI. in the courſe of his reign ſent about four thouſand of his ſubjects to the gallows, becauſe he was not abſolute, and wanted to be ſo. Lewis XIV. after the affair of the duke de Lauſun did not baniſh a ſingle courtier, becauſe he was abſolute. In the reign of Charles II. more than fifty perſons of conſequence loſt their heads at London.

XXXIV.

In the reign of Lewis XIII. there was not a ſingle year paſſed without ſome faction or other. Lewis the Juſt, began by cauſing his prime miniſter to be aſſaſſinated. He ſuffered the cardinal de Richlieu, who was more cruel than himſelf, to bathe the ſcaffolds with blood.

Cardinal Mazarin, though placed in the ſame circumſtances, did not put a ſingle perſon to death. A foreigner as he was, he could not have ſupported himſelf by acts of cruelty. If Richlieu had had no factions to contend with, he would have raiſed the kingdom to the higheſt pitch of grandeur, becauſe his cruelty, which proceeded from the haughtineſs of his temper, having no object to employ it, would have ſuffered the natural greatneſs of his ſoul to operate in its full extent.

XXXV.

In a book full of profound reflexions, and ingenious flights of fancy, deſpotiſm is reckoned among the natural forms of government. The

The author, who was a great wit, ſurely meant to rally.

There is no government naturally deſpotic. There is no country in the world, where the people ſay to one man, "Sir, we give your ſacred majeſty the power of taking our wives, our children, our goods, and our lives, and of cauſing us to be empaled according to your good pleaſure, and your adorable caprice."

The grand Turk ſwears on the Alcoran to obſerve the laws. He cannot put any one to death without a decree of the Divan, and a Fetfa of the Muphti. He is ſo little deſpotic, that he can neither change the value of money, nor break the Janiſſaries. It is not true, that he is maſter of the effects of his ſubjects. He beſtows lands, which are called, "Timariots," in the ſame manner as fiefs were formerly beſtowed.

XXXVI.

Deſpotiſm is the abuſe of monarchy, as anarchy is the abuſe of a republican form of government. A Sultan who without the forms, and in violation of the laws of juſtice, impriſons, or murders his ſubjects, is a public robber, dignified with the title of your highneſs.

XXXVII.

A modern author ſays, there is more virtue in republicks, and more honour in monarchies.

Honour is the deſire of being honoured. To be a man of honour is to do nothing unworthy of honour. We cannot ſay of a recluſe that he is a man of honour. That expreſſion is applied to ſignify that degree of eſteem which every member of ſociety would have paid to his own perſon.

We

We muſt ſettle the meaning of terms, without which we ſhall ſoon be involved in ſuch confuſion, that we ſhall no longer be able to underſtand one another.

In the time of the Roman republic, this deſire of being honoured with ſtatues, crowns of laurel, and triumphs, rendered the Romans conquerors of the greateſt part of the world. The ſpirit of honour was kept alive by the empty form of a ceremony, by a leaf of laurel or parſley.

But when the republic was aboliſhed, this kind of honour was likewiſe extinguiſhed.

XXXVIII.

A republic is not founded on virtue: it is founded on the ambition of every citizen, which checks the ambition of others; on pride reſtraining pride; and on the deſire of ruling, which will not ſuffer another to rule. Hence are formed laws, which preſerve as great an equality as poſſible. It is a ſociety where the gueſts eat at the ſame table with an equal appetite, until a ſtrong and voracious man comes, who takes all to himſelf, and leaves them only the crumbs.

XXXIX.

Little machines do not ſucceed in the main, becauſe their operations are interrupted by the friction of the wheels. The caſe is the ſame with ſtates. China cannot be governed like the republic of Lucca.

XL.

Calviniſm and Lutheraniſm are in danger in Germany: that country is full of great biſhopricks, ſovereign abbacies, and canonries, all proper for making converſions. A proteſtant prince turns catholic in order to become a biſhop, or king of a certain

country, as a princeſs does in order to get a huſband.

XLI.

If ever the Romiſh religion regains its former aſcendancy, it will be by the allurement of rich beneſices, and by means of the monks. The monks are troops that are perpetually fighting; the Proteſtants have no troops.

XLII.

It is pretended that religions are made for climates. But Chriſtianity hath long reigned in Aſia. It began in Paleſtine, and it hath penetrated as far as Norway. The Engliſhman, who ſaid that religions had their birth in Aſia, their grave in England, reaſoned much better.

XLIII.

It muſt be owned there are ſome ceremonies and myſteries, which cannot take place but in certain climates. People bathe in the Ganges at the new moons; but were they obliged to bathe in the Viſtula in the month of January, this act of religion would not be long in force, &c.

XLIV.

It is alledged that Mahomet's law prohibiting the uſe of wine is a law of the climate of Arabia, becauſe, in that country, wine would coagulate the blood, and water is refreſhing. It would have been juſt as reaſonable to have made an eleventh Commandment in Spain and Italy, enjoining the inhabitants to ply the bottle.

Mahomet did not forbid wine, becauſe the Arabians loved water. It is ſaid in the "Sonna," that

that he forbad it, becauſe he had been a witneſs of the ſhocking exceſſes which drunkenneſs occaſioned.

XLV.

All religious laws are not the effect of the nature of the climate. To eat, ſtanding, a boiled lamb with lettuce, and to throw the remainder of it into the fire; not to eat a rabbit, becauſe it has not a cloven foot, and becauſe it chews the cud; to ſprinkle one's left ear with the blood of an animal: all theſe ceremonies have little connexion with the nature of the climate.

XLVI.

If Leo X. had permitted indulgences to be ſold by the Auguſtin monks, who were wont to ſell theſe kinds of merchandize, he would have had no Proteſtants. If Anne Boleyn had not been beautiful, England had ſtill profeſſed the Romiſh religion. To what was it owing that the Spaniards were not all Arians, and afterwards Mahometans? To what was it owing that Carthage did not deſtroy Rome?

XLVII.

From one event given to deduce all the events in the world is a fine problem; but it belongs only to the Sovereign of the univerſe to ſolve it.

OF THE
EMBELLISHMENTS
OF THE
CITY OF CACHEMIRE.

THE inhabitants of Cachemire are polite and fickle, employed in trifles as other people are in ſerious buſineſs, and live like children who know not the reaſon of the orders that are given them. They complain of every thing, comfort themſelves with every thing, laugh at every thing, and forget every thing.

They had naturally no taſte for the arts. The kingdom of Cachemire ſubſiſted for more than thirteen hundred years, without having any good philoſophers, good poets, tolerable architects, painters, or ſculptors. For the ſpace of more than a thouſand years they were ſo deſtitute of commerce and manufactures, that when a marquis of Cachemire wanted ſome linen or a fine doublet, he was obliged to have recourſe to a Jew or a Banian. At length, about the beginning of the laſt century, there aroſe in Cachemire a number of men who did not ſeem to be natives of the country, and who being thoroughly verſed in the ſciences of the Perſians and Indians, carried reaſon and genius to the higheſt perfection. There luckily happened to reign, at the ſame time, a ſultan, who encouraged theſe great men, and who, by the aſſiſtance of a good vizier, civilized, embelliſhed, and enriched the kingdom.

dom. The Cachemirians received all his favours with an air of pleaſantry, and compoſed ſongs againſt the ſultan, the miniſter, and the great men who enlightened them.

After this the arts languiſhed in Cachemire. The fire which theſe heaven-inſpired geniuſes had kindled, was covered with aſhes. Nature ſeemed to be exhauſted. The glory of the arts in Cachemire conſiſted now in hardly any thing elſe than the management of the hands and heels. There were ſome perſons of great agility, who had the art of putting one leg over another to the ſound of muſical inſtruments with ſurprizing gracefulneſs. There were others who invented every week an admirable faſhion of adjuſting a ribband. And, in fine, there were ſome excellent chymiſts, who, with the eſſence of ham, and other elixirs of the like nature, put whole families, in the ſpace of a few years, into the hands of their phyſicians and creditors. By theſe fine arts the Cachemirians attained to the honour of furniſhing modes, dancers, and cooks to almoſt all Aſia.

Mean while, the people talked much of making the capital more commodious, more elegant, more wholeſome, and more beautiful than it was. They talked of it much, but they did nothing. A philoſopher of Indoſtan, who was remarkable for his public ſpirit, and who ſpoke his mind freely, however ineffectually, about every thing that related to the happineſs of mankind, or the improvement of the arts, happened to paſs through the capital of Cachemire, where he had a long converſation with one of the principal boſtangis about the manner of giving the city all that it wanted. The boſtangi agreed, that it was a ſhame for the Cachemirians not to have a grand

and

and magnificent temple, like that of Pekin or Agra; that it was a pity they had no large bazards, that is, market-places, and public magazines ſurrounded with columns, and ſerving, at once, for uſe and ornament. He acknowledged that the halls ſet apart for the public games were unworthy of a city of the fourth order; that he ſaw with indignation the moſt wretched houſes upon the moſt beautiful bridges; and that the people wiſhed in vain for ſquares, fountains, ſtatues, and all the monuments that conſtitute the glory of a nation.

"Allow me," ſaid the Indian philoſopher, "to aſk you a ſhort queſtion. Why do you not give yourſelves all that you want?" "Oh!" ſaid the boſtangi, "we have not means ſufficient for that purpoſe: it would coſt too dear." "It would coſt you nothing at all," ſaid the philoſopher. "We have already had that fine paradox propoſed to us," replied the citizen; "but theſe are the ſchemes of a philoſopher, that is, things excellent in theory, but ridiculous in practice. Our ears are ſtunned with theſe fine ſentences." "But what anſwer," ſaid the philoſopher, "did you give to thoſe who told you, that you wanted only a fixed reſolution, and that it would coſt the ſtate of Cachemire nothing to adorn your capital, and to execute all the great undertakings neceſſary for that purpoſe." "We gave him no anſwer at all," ſaid the boſtangi, "we fell a laughing according to our cuſtom, and never examined the propoſal." "Well," ſaid the philoſopher, "laugh leſs, and think more; and I will demonſtrate to you the truth of this paradox, which would make you happy, and which now alarms you ſo much." The Cachemirian, who

was

was a man of great politeneſs, bit his lips for fear he ſhould burſt out a-laughing in the Indian's face: and they had the following converſation together.

The PHILOSOPHER.

What do you mean by riches?

The BOSTANGI.

A great deal of money.

The PHILOSOPHER.

You are miſtaken. The inhabitants of South America had formerly more money than ever you will have; but as they wanted induſtry, they had none of thoſe conveniencies which money can procure; and were actually in a ſtate of poverty.

The BOSTANGI.

I underſtand you; you make riches to conſiſt in the poſſeſſion of a fertile country.

The PHILOSOPHER.

No: the Tartars of the Ukraine inhabit one of the fineſt countries in the world, and yet are in want of every thing. The wealth of a ſtate is like all the talents that depend on art and nature. Thus riches conſiſt in the ſoil and in the labour. The richeſt and the happieſt people are thoſe who cultivate the beſt ſoil with moſt induſtry; and the greateſt gift that God hath given to mankind is the neceſſity of labouring.

The BOSTANGI.

Agreed; but in order to accompliſh what we want, will require the labour of ten thouſand men for ten years; and where ſhall we find wherewithal to pay them?

The PHILOSOPHER.

Have not you paid an hundred thouſand ſoldiers during a war of ten years continuance?

The BOSTANGI.

True; and yet the ſtate did not ſeem to be impoveriſhed.

The PHILOSOPHER.

What! Have you money to ſend an hundred thouſand men to be killed, and yet want it to make ten thouſand live?

The BOSTANGI.

The two caſes are widely different: it coſts much leſs to ſend a citizen to death, than to make him carve marble.

The PHILOSOPHER.

You are ſtill miſtaken. Thirty thouſand cavalry alone are more expenſive than ten thouſand artiſts; and the truth is, that neither the one nor the other are expenſive when they are employed in the country. What did it coſt the antient Egyptians, think ye, to build their pyramids, and the Chineſe to raiſe their great wall? Onions and rice. Was their country impoveriſhed by having maintained laborious men inſtead of fattening ſluggards?

The BOSTANGI.

You reduce me to a nonplus, and yet you do not convince me. Philoſophy reaſons, but cuſtom acts.

The PHILOSOPHER.

Had men always followed this maxim, they would ſtill be eating acorns, and would not know

know what is the full moon. In order to execute grand undertakings, nothing is neceſſary but a head and hands; with theſe we can accompliſh every thing. You have fine ſtone, iron, braſs, and timber; you want nothing but the will.

The BOSTANGI.

We have every thing. Nature has been very kind to us. But what enormous expences will it require to work ſo many materials?

The PHILOSOPHER.

I do not underſtand you. What expences do you mean? Your country produces wherewithal to feed and cloath all its inhabitants. You have all the materials under your feet. You have two hundred thouſand idlers whom you may employ: nothing then remains but to make them labour, and to give them for their wages as much as may be ſufficient to maintain and cloath them. I cannot ſee what expence it will be to the kingdom of Cachemire; for, ſurely, you will not pay any thing to the Chineſe and the Perſians for obliging your citizens to work.

The BOSTANGI.

What you ſay is very true; neither money nor proviſions go out of the kingdom.

The PHILOSOPHER.

Why don't you begin to work then this very day?

The BOSTANGI.

It is difficult to put ſuch a great machine in motion.

The PHILOSOPHER.

How did you ſupport a war which coſt ſo much blood and treaſure?

The BOSTANGI.

We made the poſſeſſors of lands and money contribute in exact proportion to their ſubſtance.

The PHILOSOPHER.

Well; if they contribute for the miſery of mankind, will they give nothing for their happineſs and glory? What! have you never, ſince you were firſt formed into a political body, found out the ſecret of obliging the rich to make the poor work? Are you ſtill ignorant of the firſt principles of civil policy?

The BOSTANGI.

Though we ſhould oblige the poſſeſſors of rice, lint, and cattle, to give meat and cloaths to the poor they employ in digging the earth, and carrying burdens, we ſhould not be a whit the nearer our point. We muſt make all the artiſts labour who are employed the whole year in other buſineſs.

The PHILOSOPHER.

I have been told that there are about an hundred and twenty days in the year, on which the Cachemirians do not labour. Why do you not change the half of theſe idle days into days of labour? Why do you not employ, in raiſing your public edifices, the artiſts, who, for an hundred days, are entirely diſengaged? Then would thoſe, who now know nothing, and have only

two

two arms, ſoon acquire a habit of induſtry; you would ſoon form a nation of artiſts.

The BOSTANGI.

Theſe days are devoted to drinking and debauchery; and from thence conſiderable ſums are brought into the public treaſury.

The PHILOSOPHER.

Your reaſon is admirable; but no money can come into the public treaſury but by means of circulation: and will not labour produce a quicker circulation than debauchery, which is the parent of ſo many diſeaſes? or can it really be the intereſt of a ſtate that the people ſhould be intoxicated for one third of the year?

This converſation laſted a long time. The boſtangi, at laſt, acknowledged that the philoſopher was in the right; and he was the firſt boſtangi that was ever convinced by a philoſopher. He promiſed to perform great things, but men never perform either all they intend, or all they are able to perform.

While the reaſoner and the boſtangi were engaged in theſe ſublime ſpeculations, there happened to paſs by about twenty handſome two-legged animals with little cloaks thrown over long jackets, pointed caps on their heads, and hempen girdles about their loins. "Theſe are jolly, well-made fellows," ſaid the Indian; "how many of them have you in your country?" About an hundred thouſand of different kinds," ſaid the boſtangi. "Excellent hands," ſaid the philoſopher, "for embelliſhing Cachemire! How ſhould I like to ſee them hand-

ling the ſpade, the trowel, and the plummet!" "And I likewiſe," ſaid the boſtangi; "but theſe men are too great ſaints to work." "What do they do, then?" ſaid the Indian. "They ſing, they drink, and they digeſt," ſaid the boſtangi. "How extremely advantageous muſt that be to a ſtate!" ſaid the Indian. This converſation, though long, produced but little effect.

How

How far we ought to impoſe upon the PEOPLE.

IT is a queſtion of great importance, however little regarded, how far the people, i. e. nine tenths of the human kind, ought to be treated like apes. The deceiving party have never examined this problem with ſufficient care; and, for fear of being miſtaken in the calculation, they have heaped up all the viſionary notions they could in the heads of the party deceived.

The good people, who ſometimes read Virgil, or the Provincial letters, do not know that there are twenty times more copies of the Almanac of Liege and of the "Courier boiteux" printed, than of all the ancient and modern books together. No one, ſurely, has a greater veneration than myſelf for the illuſtrious authors of theſe Almanacs and their brethren. I know, that ever ſince the time of the ancient Chaldeans, there have been fixed and ſtated days for taking phyſic, paring our nails, giving battle, and cleaving wood. I know that the beſt part of the revenue of an illuſtrious academy conſiſts in the ſale of theſe kind of Almanacs. May I preſume to aſk, with all poſſible ſubmiſſion, and a becoming diffidence of my own judgment, what harm it would do to the world, were ſome powerful aſtrologer to aſſure the peaſants and the good inhabitants of little villages, that they might ſafely pare their nails when they pleaſe, provided it be done with a good intention? The people, I ſhall be told, would not buy the Almanacs of

this new aſtrologer. On the contrary, I will venture to affirm, that there would be found among your great geniuſes many who would make a merit in following this novelty. Should it be alledged that theſe geniuſes would form factions, and kindle a civil war, I have nothing farther to ſay on the ſubject, but readily give up, for the ſake of peace, my too dangerous opinion.

Every body knows the king of Boutan. He is one of the greateſt princes in the univerſe. He tramples under his feet the thrones of the earth; and his ſhoes (if he has any) are provided with ſceptres inſtead of buckles. He adores the devil, as is well known, and his example is followed by all his courtiers. He, one day, ſent for a famous ſculptor of my country, and ordered him to make a beautiful ſtatue of Beelzebub. The ſculptor ſucceeded to admiration. Never was there ſuch a handſome devil. But, unhappily, our Praxiteles had only five clutches to his animal, whereas the Boutaniers always gave him ſix. This capital blunder of the artiſt was aggravated, by the grand maſter of the ceremonies to the devil, with all the zeal of a man juſtly jealous of his maſter's rights, and of the ſacred and immemorial cuſtom of the kingdom of Boutan. He inſiſted that the ſculptor ſhould atone for his crime by the loſs of his head. The ſculptor replied, that his five clutches were exactly equal in weight to ſix ordinary clutches; and the king of Boutan, who was a prince of great clemency, granted him a pardon. From that time the people of Boutan were undeceived with regard to the devil's ſix clutches.

The ſame day his majeſty needed to let blood. A ſurgeon of Gaſcony, who had come to his court

court in a ſhip belonging to our Eaſt-India company, was appointed to take from him five ounces of his precious blood. The aſtrologer of that quarter cried out, that the king would be in danger of loſing his life, if he opened a vein while the heavens were in their preſent ſtate. The Gaſcon might have told him, that the only queſtion was about the ſtate of the king's health; but he prudently waited a few minutes; and then taking an Almanac in his hand, "You was in the right, great man!" ſaid he to the aſtrologer of the quarter, "the king would have died, had he been blooded at the inſtant you mention: the heavens have ſince changed their aſpect; and now is the favourable moment." The aſtrologer aſſented to the truth of the ſurgeon's obſervation. The king was cured; and by degrees, it became an eſtabliſhed cuſtom among the Boutaniers to bleed their kings whenever it was neceſſary.

A bluſtering Dominican at Rome ſaid to an Engliſh philoſopher, "You are a dog; you ſay it is the earth that turns round, never reflecting that Joſhua made the ſun to ſtand ſtill." "Well! my reverend father," replied the other; "and ſince that time the ſun hath been immoveable." The dog and the Dominican embraced each other; and even the Italians were, at laſt, convinced that the earth turns round.

An augur and a ſenator, in the time of Cæſar, lamented the declining ſtate of the republic. "The times, indeed, are very bad," ſaid the ſenator; "we have reaſon to tremble for the liberties of Rome." "Ah!" ſaid the augur, "that is not the greateſt evil; the people now begin to loſe that reſpect which they for-

merly had for our order: we ſeem barely to be tolerated; we ceaſe to be neceſſary. Some generals have the aſſurance to give battle without conſulting us; and, to compleat our misfortunes, thoſe who ſell us the ſacred pullets begin to reaſon; "Well, and why don't you reaſon likewiſe?" replied the ſenator, "and ſince the dealers in pullets in the time of Cæſar are more knowing than they were in the time of Numa, ought not you modern augurs to be better philoſophers than thoſe who lived in former ages?".

The

The Two Comforters.

ONE day the great philoſopher Citoſile ſaid to a woman who was diſconſolate, and who had good reaſon to be ſo; "Madam, the queen of England, daughter to Henry IV. was as wretched as you: ſhe was baniſhed from her kingdoms; was in the utmoſt danger of loſing her life in a ſtorm at ſea; and ſaw her royal ſpouſe expire on a ſcaffold." "I am ſorry for her," ſaid the lady; and began again to lament her own misfortunes.

"But, ſaid Citoſile, remember the fate of Mary Stuart. She loved, but with a moſt chaſte and virtuous affection, an excellent muſician, who played admirably on the baſs-viol. Her huſband killed her muſician before her face; and, in the ſequel, her good friend and relation, queen Elizabeth, who called herſelf a virgin, cauſed her head to be cut off on a ſcaffold covered with black, after having confined her in priſon for the ſpace of eighteen years." "That was very cruel," replied the lady, and preſently relapſed into her former melancholy.

"Perhaps, ſaid the comforter, you have heard of the beautiful Joan of Naples, who was taken priſoner and ſtrangled." "I have a confuſed remembrance of her ſtory," ſaid the afflicted lady.

"I muſt relate to you, added the other, the adventure of a ſovereign princeſs, who, within my memory, was dethroned after ſupper, and who died in a deſert iſland." "I know her whole hiſtory," replied the lady.

"Well then, I will tell you what happened to another great princeſs whom I inſtructed in philoſophy. She had a lover, as all great and beautiful princeſſes have: her father entered the chamber, and ſurpriſed the lover, whoſe countenance was all on fire, and his eyes ſparkling like a carbuncle. The lady too had a very florid complexion. The father was ſo highly diſpleaſed with the young man's countenance, that he gave him one of the moſt terrible blows that had ever been given in his province. The lover took a pair of tongs and broke the head of the father-in-law, who was cured with great difficulty, and ſtill bears the mark of the wound. The lady in a fright leapt out of the window and diſlocated her foot, in conſequence of which ſhe ſtill halts, though poſſeſſed in other reſpects of a very handſome perſon. The lover was condemned to death for having broken the head of a great prince: you can eaſily judge in what a deplorable condition the princeſs muſt have been when her lover was led to the gallows. I have ſeen her long ago when ſhe was in priſon: ſhe always talked to me of her own misfortunes."

"And why will you not allow me to think of mine?" ſaid the lady. "Becauſe, ſaid the philoſopher, you ought not to think of them; and ſince ſo many great ladies have been ſo unfortunate, it ill becomes you to deſpair. Think on Hecuba; think on Niobe." "Ah! ſaid the lady, had I lived in their time, or in that of ſo many beautiful princeſſes, and had you endeavoured to conſole them by a relation of my misfortunes, would they have liſtened to you, do you imagine?

Next

Next day the philoſopher loſt his only ſon, and was like to have died with grief. The lady cauſed a catalogue to be drawn up of all the kings who had loſt their children, and carried it to the philoſopher. He read it; found it very exact; and wept nevertheleſs. Three months after they renewed their viſits, and were ſurpriſed to find each other in ſuch a gay and ſprightly humour. They cauſed to be erected a beautiful ſtatue to Time, with this inſcription, TO HIM WHO COMFORTS.

On the PARADOX, That the SCIENCES have corrupted the Morals of Men.

"THank Heaven, ſaid Timon to me yeſterday, I have burnt all my books." "What, all without exception!" "I have no objection to your burning the Journal de Trevoux, and the modern romances and new pieces: but what harm have Cicero and Virgil, Racine, Fontaine, Arioſto, Addiſon, and Pope, done to you?" "I have burnt them all, ſaid he, they are the corrupters of mankind. Even the maſters of geometry and arithmetic are monſters. The ſciences are the moſt terrible ſcourge that ever came upon the earth; had it not been for them we ſhould ſtill have enjoyed the golden age. I renounce for ever your men of letters, and all thoſe countries where the ſciences are known. It is a ſhocking thing to live in cities where the people

carry in their pockets the meaſure of time in gold, where they ſend to China for little caterpillars to cloath themſelves with their down, and where we hear an hundred muſical inſtruments playing concerts, which raviſh the ear, and lull the ſoul into a ſweet repoſe. All this is ſhocking. It is evident that the Iroquois are the only virtuous people in the world; and even they muſt be far from Quebec, into which, I ſuſpect, the damnable ſciences of Europe are already introduced."

When Timon's choler had time to evaporate, I begged him to tell me, in cold blood, what had inſpired him with ſuch a ſtrong averſion to learning. He frankly acknowledged that his indignation was originally owing to the conduct of certain perſons, who make themſelves the ſlaves of the bookſellers, and who from that petty ſtate to which they are reduced by their incapacity to follow any honeſt profeſſion, inſult, in their monthly publications, the moſt reſpectable perſonages in Europe, in order to earn their wages.

"You have reaſon to be offended, ſaid I to him; but would you kill all the horſes in a town becauſe ſome of them are vicious and reſty?"

I plainly ſaw that this man had begun by hating the abuſe of the arts, and had come by degrees to hate the arts themſelves. "You will allow, ſaid he, that induſtry gives men new wants: theſe wants inflame the paſſions; and the paſſions prompt us to the commiſſion of all manner of crimes. The abbé Suger governed the ſtate with great prudence in the times of ignorance: but the cardinal de Richelieu, who was both a poet and a divine, cauſed more

more heads to be cut off than he wrote bad dramatic performances. Hardly had he eſtabliſhed the French academy, when the Cinqmars, the de Thous, and the Marillacs were ſent to the gallows. If Henry VIII. had never ſtudied, he would not have ſent two of his wives to the ſcaffold. Charles IX. would never have ordered the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, had not his preceptor Amiot taught him to compoſe verſes. Nor would the Catholics in Ireland have butchered between three and four thouſand Proteſtant families, had they not been thoroughly verſed in the ſummary of St. Thomas."

"You imagine then, ſaid I, that Attila, Genſeric, Odoacre, and the like monſters of cruelty, muſt have ſtudied long in the univerſities." "Moſt undoubtedly, ſaid he, and I am perſuaded that they muſt have wrote a great deal, both in verſe and proſe, otherwiſe they would never have deſtroyed a part of the human kind. They muſt have carefully peruſed the caſuiſtical writers, and the lax morality of the Jeſuits, to calm thoſe ſcruples of conſcience which ſavage nature alone inſpires. It is only by the force of genius and culture that people become wicked. Long live the dunces, ſince they are honeſt men." This opinion he confirmed by a variety of arguments ſufficient to have gained the prize in an academy. I allowed him to go on with his haraugue. We ſet out together for the country, where we were to ſup; and as we proceeded on our journey, he curſed the barbarity of the arts, and I read Horace.

At the corner of a wood we were attacked by robbers, and cruelly ſtript of every thing. I

aſked theſe gentlemen in what univerſity they had ſtudied; and they owned they had never learned to read.

After having been thus robbed by theſe unlettered boors, we arrived, almoſt ſtark-naked at the houſe where we were to ſup: it belonged to one of the moſt learned men in Europe. Timon, according to his principles, expected to have his throat cut. He did not, however, meet with ſuch bad treatment: the maſter gave us clothes and money, and entertained us with great hoſpitality; and after ſupper Timon called for pen and ink, to write againſt thoſe who cultivate their genius.

On TITLES of HONOUR.

IN reading Horace, I have obſerved this verſe in an epiſtle to Mæcenas: *Te dulcis amice reviſam*; "I will ſee you again, my dear friend." This Mæcenas was the ſecond perſon in the Roman empire; that is, he was a more conſiderable and a more powerful man than the greateſt monarch now in Europe.

In reading Corneille I have remarked, that in a letter to the great Scuderi, governor of Notre Dame de la Garde, he thus expreſſes himſelf, when ſpeaking of the cardinal de Richlieu; "The cardinal, your maſter and mine." This, perhaps, is the firſt time that ſuch a compliment was paid to a miniſter, ever ſince there were miniſters, kings, and flatterers in the world. The ſame Peter Corneille, the author of Cinna, humbly dedicates that play to the ſieur de Montauron, treaſurer of Spain, whom he makes no ſcruple to compare to Auguſtus. I am ſorry he did not call Montauron *Monſeigneur*.

It is ſaid that an old officer, who was but little acquainted with the forms of vanity, having wrote to the marquis de Louvois, *Monſieur*, and received no anſwer, wrote to him *Monſeigneur*, and ſtill obtained none, becauſe the miniſter had ſtill the *Monſieur* at heart. At laſt he wrote to him, "To my God, to my God Louvois;" and he began his letter with this addreſs, "My God, my Creator." Does not all this prove, that the Romans were great and modeſt, and that we are little and vain?

"How

"How do you do, my dear friend?" ſaid a duke to a gentleman: "At your ſervice, my dear friend," replied the other; and from that time his dear friend became his implacable enemy. A grandee of Portugal converſing with a grandee of Spain, always called him "Your Excellency." The Caſtilian replied, "Your Civility, *Vueſtra Merced*;" a complimental title given to thoſe who have no real one. The Portugueſe, piqued at this affront, called the Spaniard, in his turn, "Your Civility;" and then the other gave him the title of "Your Excellency." At laſt the Portugueſe, whoſe patience was quite exhauſted, ſaid to the other, "Why do you always give me the title of Civility, when I give you that of Excellency? And why do you call me your Excellency, when I give you the appellation of your Civility?" "Becauſe," replied the Caſtilian, with great humility, "all titles are equal to me, provided there be no equality between you and me."

The vanity of titles was not introduced into the northern climates of Europe till the Romans became acquainted with the Aſiatic ſublimity. All the kings of Aſia were, and ſtill are, couſin-germans to the ſun and moon. Their ſubjects dare not lay claim to this alliance; and the governor of a province, who ſtiles himſelf the "Nutmeg of Conſolation, and the Roſe of Pleaſure," would be impaled, ſhould he pretend to be related, in the moſt diſtant degree, to the ſun or moon. Conſtantine, I think, was the firſt Roman emperor that burthened the chriſtian humility with a ſtring of pompous titles.

It

It is true, the title of God was given to the emperors before his time; but the word God had no ſuch meaning then as we now affix to it. *Divus Auguſtus*, *Divus Trajanus*, meant no more than Saint Auguſtus, Saint Trajan. They thought the dignity of the Roman empire required, that the ſoul of its chief ſhould go to heaven after death; and they frequently granted the title of *Saint*, or *Divus*, to the emperors, as an earneſt of his future inheritance. It was nearly for the ſame reaſon, that the firſt patriarchs of the chriſtian church were called "Your Holineſs;" an appellation given them, to put them in mind of what they ought to be.

Some people will give themſelves very humble titles, provided they are ſure of receiving very honourable ones in return. An abbot, who calls himſelf friar, cauſes his monks to addreſs him by the title of My Lord. The pope ſtiles himſelf "the Servant of the Servants of God." A good prieſt of Holſtein, one day, wrote to pope Pius IV. "To Pius IV. the Servant of the Servants of God:" but going afterwards to Rome, to proſecute his ſuit, the inquiſition threw him into priſon, to teach him how to write.

Formerly none but the emperor had the title of Majeſty: the other kings were called your Highneſs, your Serenity, your Grace. Lewis XI. was the firſt king of France that was diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of Majeſty; a title, in reality, as ſuitable to the dignity of a great hereditary kingdom as to an elective principality: but the title of Highneſs was given to the king of France long after his time, and

we have ſtill ſome letters, written to Henry III. in which he is addreſſed by this deſignation. The ſtates of Orleans would not allow queen Catherine of Medicis to be called Majeſty. By degrees, however, this laſt denomination prevailed. The name is indifferent; the power only is not ſo. The German Chancery, always invariable in its noble cuſtoms, ſtill pretend that all kings ought to be diſtinguiſhed by no other title than that of Serenity. In the famous treaty of Weſtphalia, in which France and Sweden gave laws to the holy Roman empire, the plenipotentiaries of the emperor never preſented any Latin memorials in which "his ſacred imperial majeſty" did not treat with the "moſt ſerene kings of France and Sweden;" but the French and Swedes, on their part, did not fail to aſſert, that their "ſacred Majeſties of France and Sweden" had many cauſes of complaint againſt the "moſt ſerene emperor." At laſt all parties were made equal in the treaty. From that time the great ſovereigns have been reckoned equal in the opinion of the people; and he that beats his neighbour is always ſure to have the pre-eminence.

Philip II. was the firſt Majeſty in Spain; for "the Serenity of Charles V." was exalted into Majeſty only in virtue of his being emperor. The children of Philip II. were the firſt Highneſſes, and they afterwards became Royal Highneſſes. The duke of Orleans, brother to Lewis XIII. did not take the title of Royal Highneſs till 1631, and then the prince of Condé took the title of moſt Serene Highneſs, which the dukes of Vendome durſt not aſſume.

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The duke of Savoy had then the title of Royal Highneſs, and afterwards obtained that of Majeſty. The grand duke of Florence did as much, and almoſt arrived at Majeſty: and, in fine, the czar, who was only known in Europe by the name of grand duke, declared himſelf emperor, and has been acknowledged as ſuch.

There were formerly but two marquiſſes in Germany, two in France, and two in Italy. The marquis of Brandenbourg has become a king, and a great king; but French and Italian marquiſſes are ſomewhat of a different nature. Let an Italian citizen have the honour of giving a dinner to the legate of his province, and let the legate in drinking to him ſay, "My lord marquis, your health;" he and his ſons are dubbed marquiſſes for ever. If a provincial in France, who has no other eſtate in his village than the fourth part of a ſmall ruinous lordſhip, arrive at Paris, raiſe a ſmall fortune, or have the appearance of having raiſed one, he intitles himſelf in his deeds, "High and mighty lord, marquis, or count;" and his ſon will be made by his notary, "Moſt high and moſt mighty lord;" and as this ridiculous ambition does no harm either to the government or to civil ſociety, it is allowed to paſs unnoticed. Some French lords boaſt of having German barons in their ſtables: ſome German lords ſay that they have French marquiſſes in their kitchens; and it is not long ſince a foreigner at Naples made his coachman a duke. In matters of this nature, cuſtom is more powerful than the royal authority. If you are but little

known

known at Paris, you may be a count or a marquis as long as you pleaſe; but if you are a man of the long robe, or a collector of the revenues, and if the king give you a real marquiſate, you will not on that account be eſteemed a marquis. The famous Samuel Barnard was more truly a count than five hundred of thoſe counts whom we daily ſee, and who do not poſſeſs four arpens of land. The king erected his eſtate of Coubert into a good earldom; and yet, if in a viſit he had made himſelf known as count Barnard, the company would have burſt out a-laughing. The caſe is widely different in England. If the king gives a merchant the title of earl or baron, he preſently receives from the whole nation the name which belongs to him. People of the firſt quality, and even the king himſelf, call him, my lord. It is the ſame in Italy. They have there a regiſter of lords. The pope himſelf gives them this title. His phyſician is a lord; and no body finds fault with his dignity.

In France the *Monſeigneur* is a terrible affair. A biſhop, before the cardinal de Richelieu's time, was only "My moſt reverend father in God;" but when Richelieu was ſecretary of ſtate, and ſtill biſhop of Lucon, his brethren, the biſhops, in order to prevent their being obliged to give him this excluſive title of *Monſeigneur*, which the ſecretaries of ſtate began to aſſume, agreed to give it to themſelves. This ſtep met with no oppoſition from the public. But as it was a new title which the king had not granted to Biſhops, they were ſtill called in the edicts, declarations, decrees, and in every thing that proceeded from the court only

Seiurs,

Seiurs; and the gentlemen of the council, in writing to a biſhop, only called him *Monſieur*. The dukes and peers met with more difficulty in putting themſelves in poſſeſſion of *Monſeigneur*. The grand nobility, and what is called the grand robe, flatly refuſed them this diſtinction. The higheſt triumph of human pride is to receive titles of honour from thoſe who think themſelves our equals; but it is difficult to arrive at this point; becauſe we every where find that pride combats pride. When the dukes demanded the poor gentlemen to ſtile them *Monſeigneur*, the preſidents demanded the ſame from the advocates and procurators. We have known a preſident refuſe to be let blood becauſe the ſurgeon ſaid to him, "Sir, in which arm would you have me to bleed you?" There was an old counſellor of the grand chamber who behaved with leſs ceremony. A pleader ſaid to him, "My lord, the gentleman, your ſecretary—." The counſellor ſtopped him ſhort, and ſaid, "You have committed three blunders in three words; I am not a lord; my ſecretary is not a gentleman; he is my clerk."

In order to terminate this grand diſpute of vanity, all the men of the nation muſt one day become *Monſeigneurs*, as all the women, who were formerly *Mademoiſelle*, are now become *Madame*. When one Spaniſh beggar meets another, he ſays to him, "Seigneur, has your courteſy drank chocolate?" This polite manner of expreſſion elevates the ſoul, and preſerves the dignity of the ſpecies.

Cæſar and Pompey were called Cæſar and Pompey in the ſenate. But theſe men did not know

know how to live. They concluded their letters with *vale*, farewel.

We were, about ſixty years ago, Affectionate ſervants:" we are now become, "Moſt humble and moſt obedient;" and, "We have actually the honour to be ſo." I pity our poſterity, who will find it difficult to make any addition to theſe pretty forms. The duke de Epernon, who exceeded all the Gaſcons in pride and haughtineſs, but not in political abilities, wrote to the cardinal de Richlieu a little before his death, and concluded his letter with, "Your moſt humble and moſt obedient;" but recollecting that the cardinal had only given him, "Your moſt affectionate," he diſpatched a meſſenger to bring back the letter, which was already ſent off, and having happily recovered it, he wrote, "Your moſt affectionate," and thus died in the bed of honour.

End of the TWELFTH VOLUME.